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Some like it haute



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Shahak leaving IDF today; to announce plans next week

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Former chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak is to be officially discharged from the IDF this morning and is expected to announce his candidacy for prime minister next week.

Shahak, who intends to set up a centrist party together with MK Dan Meridor, is to have his first meeting as a civilian soon with President Ezer Weizman.

Meanwhile, Israel Radio said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a Likud faction

meeting last night that he would like to see elections in May or June.

Naveh quits as cabinet secretary, Page 3

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert is expected to run against Netanyahu for the Likud leadership, Likud sources said. Communications Minister

Limor Livnat met with Olmert yesterday to try to persuade him to challenge Netanyahu, and persistent rumors after the meeting said Olmert has decided to run against Netanyahu. Shahak has already arranged a

Elections '99

meeting with Labor MK Shlomo Ben-Ami next week and asked him to be No. 3 in the new party. Both Shahak and Meridor see Ben-Ami as an asset, especially in winning Sephardi votes.

But Ben-Ami indicated his intention to stay in Labor. "I don't see the centrist party any more capable of making headway with this public than Labor," he said. Meanwhile, there are rumors of



Ehud Olmert (David Rubinger)

presentation of his candidacy for prime minister and his refusal to

say whether he would step down for Shahak is perceived as a message that he will head the new party and not let Shahak's people dictate its affairs.

Sources close to Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak rejected the possibility of Ben-Ami's moving over to the new party. "It's all rumors and disinformation. Ben-Ami is one of Labor's pillars and the leader of the party's renewal. He is a very important part of Labor and very close to Barak. Ben-Ami will not go," one source said.

Labor sources also rejected the

notion that a number of MKs might desert, noting the new center party isn't all that eager to take in Labor refugees.

"They have too many people there already," one source said. Meridor's Knesset office buzzed with MKs looking for a place in the new party. They included Avraham Poraz (Shinui), Yisrael Harel and Alex Lubotzky (Third Way), Rafik Haj-Yihye (Labor), Mordechai Zandberg (Tsomet), and David Magen (Gesher).

See SHAHAK, Page 6

Kfar Blum members tell of their near-miss

By DAVID RUDGE

The remains of a Katyusha rocket lie embedded in the concrete floor of the carpentry workshop just inside where the door had been before the blast.

There were three people — two carpenters who were working at their benches and a woman who had come to collect a finished job — inside the premises on Kibbutz Kfar Blum when the rocket literally blew in through the open door at 7:30 yesterday morning and exploded a few meters from them.

All three of them somehow survived this brush with one of the deadly rockets fired by Hizbullah terrorists from north of the security zone.

One of the carpenters was hit in the chest by shrapnel and moderately wounded; the woman was hit in the legs and lightly hurt.

The other carpenter, who had been further away from the blast, escaped unscathed, although his hearing was damaged, like that of the others.

"It was a miracle that everybody got out alive, a big miracle," said Benny, who had just started work in the factory virtually adjoining the carpentry shop when the rocket struck.

It was the first time a Katyusha rocket has scored a direct hit on the community, despite the fact that many have fallen in the area in the past, especially on nearby Kiryat Shmona.

Benny, a kibbutz member, was wounded while on reserve duty during the Lebanon War. During Operation Grapes of Wrath in 1996, a Katyusha exploded near the kibbutz entrance as he was on the steps of his home.

"It was a lot farther away, at least 100 meters, than this time, but it had more of an effect on me because I felt the shock wave from the blast," he said. "This time it happened so suddenly and was so unexpected in terms of it being so close that I didn't even have time to be scared."

Benny, 45, married with three children, first checked to make sure there were no casualties among the others who were working in the factory before going outside.

"There was a cloud of dust so thick that I couldn't even see the carpentry workshop opposite. I saw the wounded carpenter coming outside through the cloud along with the other one."

"Two other members took him into the factory and gave him first aid until our own nurse came. She treated him until the ambulances got here within four minutes," he said.

When the dust and smoke cleared, the damage from the blast was only too evident. A bicycle shelter outside the carpentry shop had been blown away, along with the cycles, an industrial heater, and the whole wall of the workshop, as well as most of the roof.

Moshiko Shtork, 50, from Moshav Beit Hillel, who works as the technical manager at the factory, said only a handful of workers were present at the time, all of them from the kibbutz.

Outside employees, mainly from Kiryat Shmona, did not turn up because they had been instructed to remain in bomb shelters. "This almost certainly reduced casualties."

"I was in the production facility when I heard several explosions and then one that was very loud and I knew it was very close indeed," said Shtork.

Perhaps one of the luckiest people was Shmuel Rubinstein, a kibbutz member who did not go to his office yesterday morning as usual, because he was celebrating his 78th birthday.

His office in the Galcon factory, less than eight meters from where the rocket exploded, was virtually destroyed by the blast.

"I was supposed to be in the office, but my wife said I should stay at home to celebrate my birthday," said Rubinstein, who immigrated from South Africa in 1946 and has been a kibbutz member since 1949.

"I heard the bang at 7:30 and I knew it had hit our community, but I didn't expect it to be on my office," said Rubinstein, an engineer by profession who helps arrange imports for the factory. "When I came here I saw the wreck of what was my office. I prefer not to think what might have happened had I been in there at the time."

PM threatens to retaliate

Katyushas wound 12, cause millions of shekels in damage

By DAVID RUDGE

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday warned that Israel would retaliate for Hizbullah's Katyusha rocket attacks on Galilee early yesterday,

- Civilian deaths fuel Lebanon debate, Page 2
- Probe finds F-16 pilot misidentified his target, Page 2
- 'I saw death flying toward us,' Page 2

which wounded 12 people and caused millions of shekels in damage.

Some 250 apartments, a commercial center, orchards, and dozens of cars were hit.

Despite the retaliation threat, however, relative quiet returned to the region later in the day and residents who had spent the previous night in bomb shelters were allowed to return above ground and resume their normal lives.

The public shelters remained open, however, and many residents said they would sleep in them or in security rooms in their homes for the second night running as a precaution.

Netanyahu's warning was made during a visit to Kiryat Shmona to see for himself the damage wreaked on the town and its residents by the 7:30 a.m. Katyusha barrage.

"Israel views very seriously Hizbullah's firing on Kiryat Shmona and northern communities," Netanyahu told reporters after inspecting a multi-story apartment block in Kiryat Shmona that suffered a direct hit.

"In contrast to our mistake yesterday in which [Lebanese] civilians were tragically killed by accident, Hizbullah deliberately tried to kill civilians here, especially

children on their way to school," he said.

"We cannot allow this to pass quietly. We will respond in our own time and according to our calculations, but we will respond."

Yesterday's IDF response was relatively muted, with IDF gunners blasting rocks and boulders north of the security zone. There were no reports of any casualties among Hizbullah gunmen or Katyusha rocket crews as a result of the IDF fire.

Hizbullah said the rocket attacks were in retaliation for the deaths of several Lebanese, including Nadwa Osman and six of her seven children, in an IAF raid near Janta village, in the northern part of Lebanon's Bekaa valley on Tuesday.

The IDF issued a statement immediately after the incident saying the deaths of the family had been unintentional and their farmhouse had been hit because of an error. Only the woman's husband, Mohammed, and 14-year-old son, Ala, survived.

The IAF planes had been aiming at an area some 300 meters away used by Hizbullah as a training base. One of the planes hit the target, but the second dropped its bombs on the farmhouse by mistake. An investigation by the IAF found that the most likely cause was pilot error. The inquiry is continuing.

In continued fighting in south Lebanon, meanwhile, a South Lebanese Army soldier was killed yesterday in a roadside bombing north of the security zone in the Jezzeine area. Hizbullah claimed responsibility for the blast.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged all parties in Lebanon yesterday to end military action and stop endangering civilians.

"He deplores the death of Lebanese civilians in an Israeli air raid, which prompted the firing of rockets by Lebanese armed elements into northern Israel, endangering Israeli civilians," a UN spokesman said yesterday.

See RETALIATE, Page 6



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) surveys damage to a home in Kiryat Shmona yesterday that took a direct hit from a Katyusha rocket. (GPO)

PA frees Yassin from house arrest

By BEN LYNNFIELD

The Palestinian Authority, which yesterday released Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin from house arrest, is weighing the release of most of the Hamas detainees in its custody, according to PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Midein.

Referring to about 300 people in PA jails for alleged links with Hamas, Abu Midein said: "Most of them are innocent people. Should we keep them in jail because they are Hamas? We don't have any evidence against most of them, just that

our intelligence services said they are in Hamas."

"We can't keep them in jail," he added. "We are going to check them on a name by name basis."

A committee headed by PA Chairman Yasser Arafat has already begun the evaluation process, Abu Midein said. In his view, the only ones who should remain behind bars are those believed to be involved in planning attacks against Israelis.

Yassin was freed as a gesture for the Muslim sacred month of Ramadan, according to PA officials. Musa Zaabout, a Palestinian legis-

lator who lobbied for Yassin's release, said the release may portend an improvement in ties between Hamas and the PA.

"As long as Israel does not give the Palestinians their rights, there is a good chance to improve the relations between the PA and Hamas. People look for unity," said Zaabout, a Hamas supporter.

Hamas leader Ismail Abu Shanab said: "We are open to dialogue and are looking forward to national unity as the shield to protect us from the tyranny of the Netanyahu government."

Yassin was placed under house

arrest in late October, after a Hamas attempt to blow up a bus of Israeli schoolchildren at Kfar Darom.

After his release, the wheelchair bound cleric was surrounded by rejoicing followers who kissed and greeted him. AP reported from Gaza City.

"This is a sign, a gesture, it is symbolic," Abu Shanab said. "But we have many other people in PA jails. We view this step as releasing the pressure on Sheikh Yassin himself. He does not move around anyway, but his advice will be more available now and there will be greater access to him."

Abu Midein said Yassin's release is not related to the deadlock over the Wye agreement and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's placing of added conditions on the Palestinians for Israeli implementation.

See YASSIN, Page 6

Property tax to rise 5.2%

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

Municipal property taxes (armona) will increase by a minimum 5.2 percent next month, the Knesset Finance Committee decided yesterday.

This is less than Interior Minister Eli Shais and former finance minister Yaakov Neeman recommended on December 13.

The ministers asked for a 5.5% hike, with local authorities being permitted to add a further 4% "in exceptional circumstances." The committee yesterday reduced the latter amount to a maximum 2.6%.

The 5.2% rise is based on the 12 months from September 1997, during which the consumer price index rose 4.7%. The Union of Local Authorities in Israel originally requested an overall 6.7% increase.

While the Treasury said, based on this year's experience, that very

few local councils would choose to increase the tax by more than 5.2%, opposition politicians said they are convinced residents will face higher charges.

Last year, the ministers first asked MKs to approve an 8.9% tax hike, in line with the increase in the CPI between September 1996

to September 1997.

Neeman and Shais then returned to the Finance Committee, requesting an 18.9% increase, but after a series of debates the committee approved a compromise 13.9%. Authorities were allowed to increase rates by a further 5% if they deemed it necessary.

Israel set to lose millions in European R&D funding

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

Unless Israel implements the Wye Memorandum within the next three weeks, it stands to lose out on millions of dollars of European research and development funding, The Jerusalem Post has learned.

Officials in both Jerusalem and Brussels said yesterday several member states, led by France, are

making Israel's participation in the lucrative 5th Framework Program dependent on its compliance with Wye.

France last night denied that it was leading the campaign against Israel's entry.

The program, which will run until 2002, is worth ECU 14.96 billion (\$12.79b).

Full story, Page 13



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NEWS

in brief

Teacher suspected of abusing student

A math teacher in a Netanya school has been accused by one of her students and the boy's parents of sexually abusing him while giving him private lessons at the teacher's home, Israel Radio reported last night.

An Education Ministry spokesman said the alleged incident happened several weeks ago, and the police placed the woman under house arrest for two weeks. The ministry then placed her on vacation for two weeks. The spokesman said the teacher has not been suspended, but is no longer teaching the boy's class. Psychological help was also provided for the pupil, he said, but added that no further action can be taken against the teacher unless the police do so.

Aryeh Dean, Cohen

Driver kills man at crosswalk

A 19-year-old driver, apparently speeding, ran over a 76-year-old man at a crosswalk yesterday afternoon, Tel Aviv police said. The police said the victim was a cyclist who was run down as he was walking across the road with his bicycle. He was killed on the spot.

Itim

NY lawyer to be 'master' in Swiss bank suits

Judith Gribetz, a Manhattan attorney, will be named the "special master" to oversee the \$1.25 billion settlement of the class-action lawsuits against the Swiss banks, according to lawyers representing survivors. Gribetz, who served as chairman of the New York Jewish Community Relations Council and the Hebrew Free Loan Society, will be appointed early next month by US District Court Judge Edward Korman, who will make the ultimate decision about the distribution of the settlement.

Marilyn Henry

Report: Terror planned at Bekaa meeting

Representatives of Saudi renegade Osama bin Laden and Hamas, as well as a Palestinian with close ties to Iraq, met in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley this week to plan terrorist attacks on US and British targets. Quoting "reliable Israeli intelligence sources," the newsletter *Foreign Report*, to be published in London tomorrow, said no Syrian officials attended the meeting.

It said the meeting discussed mounting attacks in the Gulf and in Europe in revenge for the recently completed Operation Desert Fox. Afghanistan-based bin Laden, a multi-millionaire Islamic extremist, is regarded as being responsible for the bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in August.

Douglas Davis

Mitza asked to ban water sports on Kishon

Environment Ministry Director-General Nehama Ronen this week asked Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna to ban water sports on the Kishon River, because of the serious health threats from the heavy pollution there. The ministry established a special panel of deputy directors-general to discuss the rehabilitation of the river. Environment Ministry tests of the Kishon waters showed "unacceptable levels of acidity, stemming from industrial wastewater, which pose a real threat to the health of the water-sport teams," a spokesman said.

Local youth groups regularly use the river for rowing and canoeing and other boating activities.

Liat Collins

Biran: Defense exports drop sharply

Defense industry exports in 1998 are expected to drop sharply, down from \$2.5 billion in 1997, Defense Ministry Director-General Ilan Ramo said yesterday.

Biran told kibbutz industry executives in Tel Aviv that recent international developments had created "unbalanced markets" and "disorder," and that for the local defense industry to survive, firms must merge.

"Whoever isn't really big, won't last," he said. He added, however, that Israel's defense firms, such as Rafael, are an asset, not a liability. "There is no country in the world that has as many varied missiles as Israel," he said.

Itim

Lau: Rabbis should serve an internship

Potential rabbis should undergo a period of apprenticeship, in addition to the tests they must pass to receive ordination, Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau suggested yesterday.

He said the internship should last six months to a year, and include exposure to the handling various issues, including Shabbat, kashrut, medical problems, marriage, and family counseling.

Lau said that such apprenticeships had been a traditional practice in the past, and should be renewed. He said the proposal has the backing of various yeshiva heads.

Itim

Russia's top Communist attacks Jews

Communist Party chief Gennady Zyuganov, effectively endorsing the antisemitic rhetoric of his allies, yesterday accused Jews of bringing on the "extinction" of Russia's people and the country's economic woes, according to Interfax.

Zyuganov - who finished second in the 1996 presidential election - also suggested that Russia's Jewish community condemn Zionism.

"Our people are not blind. They cannot fail to see that the spread of Zionism in the state government in Russia is one of the reasons for the current catastrophic condition of the country, the mass impoverishment and the process of extinction of its people," Zyuganov said in an open letter published in Moscow.

AP

Rise in violent crime in 1998

Police figures released yesterday show that violent crime rose 7.8 percent between January and November over the same period last year. There were 102 cases of attempted murder, while there were 78 in 1997. There was also a 6.3% increase in cases of domestic violence this year.

Itim

Civilian deaths fuel Lebanon debate

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and NINA GILBERT

Tuesday's bombing mistake that killed Lebanese mother Nadwa Osman and six of her children has reopened the debate on Israel's role in Lebanon.

Former IAF commander Maj.-Gen. (Res.) Avihu Bin-Nun told Israel Radio yesterday that the IDF should not pull out of Lebanon without securing an agreement with the countries concerned. Leaving Lebanon in the present situation will continue to endanger the residents in northern Israel, Bin-Nun said.

Minister of Agriculture Rafael Eitan said that the only solution to the situation is to widen the security zone.

MK Uzi Landau (Likud), chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, told the committee yesterday that, "certainly we must regret that a [Lebanese] family was harmed. However, it must be made clear to the other side Israel will not tolerate the response of a salvo of Katyushas."

MK Yossi Beilin (Labor), who is outspoken on withdrawing from Lebanon, said yesterday that "the salvo of Katyushas that hit Kiryat Shmuna is more proof that the security zone is not effective in protecting the northern residents."

The zone itself, Beilin said, is a danger to residents of the North and does not allow them to lead normal lives.

According to Beilin, the conflict between the IDF and Hizbullah is what is creating the attacks on Lebanese civilians and the response in the form of Katyushas on the Galilee.

"We must get out of there," he said. If a solution can't be reached via Syria, he said, an agreement with Lebanon isn't possible either, adding that unilateral withdrawal remains the only answer.

"If the IDF withdraws from Lebanon, and it's replaced by the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL soldiers, the estimation is that Hizbullah will continue to honor



A Hizbullah guerrilla carries the body of one of the six Osman children during a mass funeral in Baalbek yesterday following the IAF bombing raid.

the Grapes of Wrath understandings and not attack Israel," he said.

According to Landau, the rules of the game in Lebanon must be changed, and Israel must hold Syria responsible.

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon yesterday sent his condolences to the two surviving members of the Osman family, the father Mohammed and son Ala.

He said the Knesset also identifies with the "great suffering being experienced by the residents of the North sitting in bomb shelters under threat from Katyusha rockets." "The only way to prevent such disasters," he said, "is through peace and security for residents of Lebanon and the North."

MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) said that what happened to the Lebanese family was a disaster that shouldn't have happened. "It shows that we are too deeply involved in Lebanon," he said. "We should only be as deep in Lebanon as is needed to protect the northern settlements." This he estimated at 500 to 1,000 meters. "I am not saying that we should implement a unilateral withdrawal," he added.

MK Dedi Zucker (Meretz) said the residents of the North "are paying an unnecessary price for the 'human error' of the political echelons and not of a pilot."

Meanwhile, two mothers of soldiers killed in Lebanon met yesterday morning with members of the committee. Orna Shimoni said the

mothers have been camped outside Beit Hanassi for a month and their protest has only touched a few MKs. "I fear that during the election season we will have a deterioration in the situation," she added.

The MKs were told that a new Lebanon policy should be a priority and not only when soldiers are being killed by roadside bombs and Katyushas are falling.

Middle East expert Yossi Olmert said the Katyusha attacks and the rush to shelters are the latest symptom of Israel's total lack of a coordinated policy in southern Lebanon and the understandings reached after the Grapes of Wrath operation.

Speaking on Arutz 7, Olmert

declared that residents in the North and the entire country have become hostages of Hizbullah. The understandings reached in "Grapes of Wrath" and Operation Accountability have totally collapsed, leaving the Hizbullah with a strategic edge.

Instead of launching an immediate strike against them, everyone is pushed into bomb shelters, causing panic and fear among residents. Olmert stressed that he now supports a full withdrawal from Lebanon, because there is no clear national policy concerning Lebanon.

He said it would be preferable to have a strong policy in northern Israel than to have no policy in southern Lebanon.

Pilot error responsible for bombing deaths

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

An F-16 pilot misidentified his target and mistakenly bombed the home of the Osman family, killing the mother and six children in the village in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley on Tuesday, the IDF announced yesterday.

According to Channel 1, no disciplinary action will be taken against the pilot.

Security officials warned that a response to yesterday's Katyusha attack on the North would be forthcoming. Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz told Channel 1 last night that Israel is at war with Hizbullah and will respond to the Katyusha attack.

"We believe that we must respond to such violations, but will choose the time to do so," he said.

Mofaz praised the IDF ground troops, the navy and the IAF, who, he said, work around the clock in the security zone to ensure the security of residents in the North.

"I would like to stress the importance of the IAF's role in fighting Hizbullah," he said.

Mofaz denied that the IDF had lost its deterrent capability and stressed that the appraisals of the situation carried out by the Northern Command and security officials had been correct.

Mofaz repeated comments he made to the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, saying that if the IDF mistakenly pulled out of Lebanon there would be a higher price to pay.

Withdrawal can only take place through an agreement between the sides, with a third body taking responsibility for the area once the IDF leaves.

The army and the air force take great pains to avoid harming civilians, former IAF fighter pilot and air warfare strategist Shmuel Gordon said yesterday.

He said Tuesday's incident did not reflect anything about the training or skills of IAF pilots. While such mistakes are serious, the solution is not to cashier the pilot, but to investigate the incident and work to prevent a recurrence.

"If you hit a building in a town and civilians within a five-meter radius are injured it cannot be

helped, but if a bomb drops 300 meters from the target it can't be forgiven," he said. "However, if we oust every pilot or commander or officer who makes a mistake, we won't be left with anyone."

Landau stressed that the pilot is doubtless suffering from the knowledge that, as a result of his mistake, residents in the North are threatened.

Former OC Air Force Avihu Bin-Nun declared yesterday that while the IAF enjoys an excellent record in compiling intelligence and preparing for missions, it is not an insurance company.

Speaking on Israel Radio, Bin-Nun recalled that, during the Yom Kippur War, one of the planes bombing Damascus accidentally released a bomb that fell on the Russian Embassy.

The IAF's "surgical bombing" strategy has been carried out successfully for many years and fighter pilots prepare intensively for such missions.

He noted that during the recent Operation Desert Fox, US and British fighter planes also sometimes missed their targets. Even when bombs drop on the designated targets, damage to the surrounding area cannot be prevented, he said.

'I saw death flying toward us'

By DAVID RUDGE

Mali Nizri and her son Matan, 10, had barely slept Tuesday night in their Kiryat Shmuna apartment, because of concern over Katyusha attacks.

They should have followed instructions and tried to sleep in the nearby public bomb shelter, but Matan suffers from asthma and Nizri said there were insufficient mattresses.

"The previous evening, after we heard the news about the deaths of the woman and her children in Lebanon, we knew that there would be a serious attack on Kiryat Shmuna," said Nizri, 35.

"We decided to sleep in our security room, because we knew it would be impossible to sleep properly in the bomb shelter due to the lack of amenities.

"In the morning, I was listening to the radio to hear what was happening, and I was waiting for the news bulletin at 7:30 when I looked out the window and saw four huge balls of fire speeding straight toward our building. I shouted at Matan to lie down and I ran toward him. I tripped and fell, but I managed to get up and I dived into the security room. I pushed Matan under the bed and covered him with blankets."

One of the rockets struck the side of the building above Nizri's apartment, blowing out the windows in their home, and they were both covered in glass.

"I was cut in a few places, which is dangerous for me because I'm a diabetic," said Nizri. "The police, and Magen David Adom were here within moments and quickly took us to the emergency room."

We were so lucky, as were the people in the flat above us, who also escaped alive. Our homes, however, looked like disaster zones.

"That's nothing compared to what I saw coming at us. I saw death, the end of our lives, flying toward us," she said.

Matan was shaken. "I had just said, 'Thank God the night passed quietly,' and then I had my mom shouting at me to lie down. There was a huge blast and suddenly our home was filled with smoke and dust and there was glass everywhere. Mom was hurt and she has very high blood pressure and I had a high temperature, but otherwise we were okay."

Nizri said the attack is proof that the security zone is vital to protect residents of the North.

"I had an argument with members of the Four Mothers move-

ment when they demonstrated to refuse to fly from January 1 unless their demands for full insurance coverage are met. The matter was discussed yesterday in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and representatives of the pilots were expected to raise it in discussions with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai last night.

The pilots, and reserve divers and explosives experts, want their insurance policies to include life insurance at no extra cost. Some of the policies do not provide for disability pay nor indemnify family members in the event of an accident during reserve duty. They also are not paid for loss of the ability to work.

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz told the committee there is a "justified feeling" among these reserve combat personnel that they are being discriminated against compared to combat officers on active service.

Representatives of the reservists told the committee that there is a temporary arrangement giving pilots a NIS 750,000 life insurance policy, but they want the matter to be fully resolved. They particularly stressed insurance for loss of ability to work.

The committee supported their demands and started legislation on the matter, which they hope will be passed before the Knesset dissolves for the elections.

The MKs said they fear damage to morale among reserve personnel under the present circumstances.

With deep sorrow we mourn the passing of

SUSI SARAH SIEGMAN 71

beloved wife of

Reb. Menachem Mendel Siegman 71

who passed away Tuesday in New York.

Shiva at the home of her daughter, Esther Halpern, Rehov Sapir 7, Kiryat Krimitz, Ramat Gan

Siegman, Halpern and Lobel families

With sorrow we announce the death of our beloved uncle

WERNER AHLFELD

on December 22, 1998 - 3 Tevet 5759

Shoshana Ladani, Ruth Manassen, families and friends.

The funeral took place on Wednesday

NEWSLINE

With EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR MOHAMMED KASSIOUTY

Do you think it possible to negotiate with Lebanon regarding a withdrawal without having to negotiate with Syria?

No. You cannot split the negotiations. Lebanon has a special relationship with Syria and will not negotiate alone. Syria, in turn, is the key to achieving a comprehensive peace. So you definitely need to make progress on that track, before you can work with the Lebanese.

What about a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon? What sort of assurances could Israel get that its North would not be attacked by Hizbullah? You are welcome to withdraw unilaterally, no one will stop

you. And although there will be no formal assurances, think of the example of Kafr Khalous. The area was closed, and no one could go from Jezzine to the coast.

Suddenly the IDF decided to withdraw, and what happened? Hizbullah, which was all around the area and could have taken Kafr Khalous, didn't, and now the road is open.

This is but an example of what will be if you withdraw unilaterally.

The Lebanese will make no promises, but it will be in their national interest to control their land and keep sovereignty. The North of Israel will be safe. 100 percent safe.

Danna Harman

HELP!

The Jerusalem Post Funds is looking for two volunteers to help with its charity work for a few hours a week. If you can spare the time, your assistance would be most useful. Travel expenses will be refunded. Please phone Illie at 02-537-6528 for details. Thank you.

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Working lunch

MK Dan Meridor (left) and former Tel Aviv mayor Ronni Milo, both of whom have announced they will run for the premiership, confer over lunch at the Rungit restaurant in Jerusalem yesterday.

(Isaac Harari)

Ramon rejects potential Labor defectors

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

MK Haim Ramon yesterday refused to attend a meeting of potential Labor Party "deserters" to a centrist list said to be forming under former chief of General Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak.

Jewish Agency chairman Avraham Burg invited Ramon to a meeting with MKs Haggai Merom and Nissim Zivili, who are believed to be among some 10 Labor MKs considering quitting the party and joining Shabak.

"This is neither the time nor the place," Ramon said.

Asked about his political plans earlier this week, Ramon said: "I'm in Labor, period." He added he has no problem with party leader Ehud Barak, but with the party and the way it functions.

This renewed the fears in Labor that Ramon might be considering deserting Labor for Shabak's list, taking a number of Laborites with him.

Barak met Meimad leaders on Monday, in an attempt to persuade

them to join the One Israel movement he is forming, of which Labor is part. But Meimad's leaders refused, stating they support

MK Dan Meridor, who is expected to join Shabak.

Naveh quits to run for Knesset

CABINET secretary Dan Naveh tendered his resignation yesterday so as to be eligible to run for Knesset in the upcoming elections. The resignation takes effect today.

No replacement has yet been named for Naveh, who has served as cabinet secretary since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was elected two-and-a-half years ago. Netanyahu spokesman Aviv Bushinsky said yesterday that several candidates — from both inside and out of the government — are being considered for the post and that a decision would be announced in the coming days.

MK ZE'EV (Benny) Begin is expected to announce shortly that he will be running for prime minister at the head of a new right-wing party, MK Michael Kleiner, head of the Land of Israel Front, intimated yesterday.

"We're setting up the nucleus of a right-wing party to represent the Right, former Herut and Likud members and Tekuma members. I expect we'll hold a press conference within the next few days and Begin is expected to be there," Kleiner said, after a meeting with Begin, MK David Re'em and members of the Tekuma movement in his Knesset office yesterday morning.

Kleiner said the new party already has a platform. "It's the platform of the historical Herut movement," he said.

Begin said earlier this week he is acting to form a right-wing movement as an alternative to the Likud, which he is quitting. Begin would not say whether he would contend for prime minister as head of the new movement, but stated he would announce his intentions in the next few days.

Right-wing leaders such as Kleiner and Moledet MK Beany Elod are acting to form one "national camp" list behind whose leader all the right-wing parties and movements can rally, to prevent a splitting of the vote that would harm the Right's chances in the next elections.

However, the National Religious Party still prefers to run independently.

THE holding of elections will be a boon for the Postal Authority, which expects to handle at least 25 million more pieces of mail in 1999 from can-

didates trying to woo voters. In 1998, it has handled some 570 million pieces of mail.

Authority Director-General Moshe Tery said at a press conference that he had set up a special team to prepare for the upcoming elections.

During the last national elections in 1996, the authority processed an extra 19 million pieces of mail: 8 million for party primaries, 7 million for Knesset parties and prime ministerial candidates and 4 million

official notices to voters. The 1992 elections had added only 10 million pieces of mail.

The large number of unknown or little-known candidates for the Knesset and

growing number of would-be prime ministers will help to increase the volume of mail, he said.

Tery was to have stepped down soon from his position after two-and-a-half years in his job to return to private business. Yesterday, however, Communications Minister Limor Livnat's candidate to replace him, Eitan Robb, asked to be relieved of the post. Tery will thus continue as director-general until the end of February 1999 until she can decide on a new candidate.

ENVIRONMENT Ministry Director-General Nehama Ronen has scheduled a press conference Monday at which she is expected to announce her resignation from the ministry and intention to run in the next elections.

Ronen was appointed to the position by Tsomet leader and Environment and Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan. Yediot Aharonot recently portrayed her in a large feature as Eitan's heir as party leader.

But sources close to Ronen said yesterday she has "received offers from a number of parties, including those considered centrist." Ronen is also considered close to Dan Meridor.

MK OPHIR Pines-Paz (Labor) has asked Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein to freeze senior government appointments in the period leading up to the elections.

"It's inconceivable that at the last minute the government will snatch-up positions and saddle the next government with long-term appointments which will hinder it from creating alternative policies," Pines said.

Threat of split in settlers' council

Land of Israel Front, Tekuma meet to discuss joint list

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The current political instability is causing discord among members of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza and may well lead to the toppling of its leadership.

While settler leaders have called for toppling the government, especially following the signing of the Wye agreement, council spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar said the intent was to prevent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from buckling under the intense US pressure.

Many are disappointed with Netanyahu's leadership, but realize — perhaps too late — that there is no alternative who would meet the settlers' needs.

The council, said Tayar, represents the Jewish residents and does not run political parties or candidates for the Knesset. The activities preceding the 1996 elections were a unique situation, she said, because of the change in government policy and direction that was perceived by settlers as endangering their existence. "Today the situation isn't the same," she said.

The council would prefer to see unified support for a candidate representing the entire national camp. The establishment of the Tekuma Party by Beit El council head Uri Ariel and Rabbi Menahem Feliks, however, concerns council members who fear that it will create a split reminiscent of that in 1992, when the Shamir government was toppled and Labor came to power.

"The council deeply regrets that our colleagues have made a deliberate mistake reminiscent of 1992 and we will not be affiliated with the party," she said.

Tayar also said that former council chairman Yisrael Harel's declaration that he plans to support MK Uzi Landau (Likud) as a candidate for prime minister does not represent the majority of the council, but his own personal beliefs.

Members of the Land of Israel Front and Tekuma met yesterday afternoon in the office of MK Michael Kleiner seeking to form a joint list.

Among those attending were MK Ze'ev (Benny) Begin (Likud), MK David Re'em (Likud), Moshe Leshem of Gamla Shall Not Fall Again, and Ariel.

According to reports, Begin plans to head the list. Those at the meeting stressed that the list will not run as a splinter group or if it endangers the unity of the nationalist camp.

Tayar said the council plans to discuss the current situation and important decisions that may lead to a split and bring about new council elections will be taken.

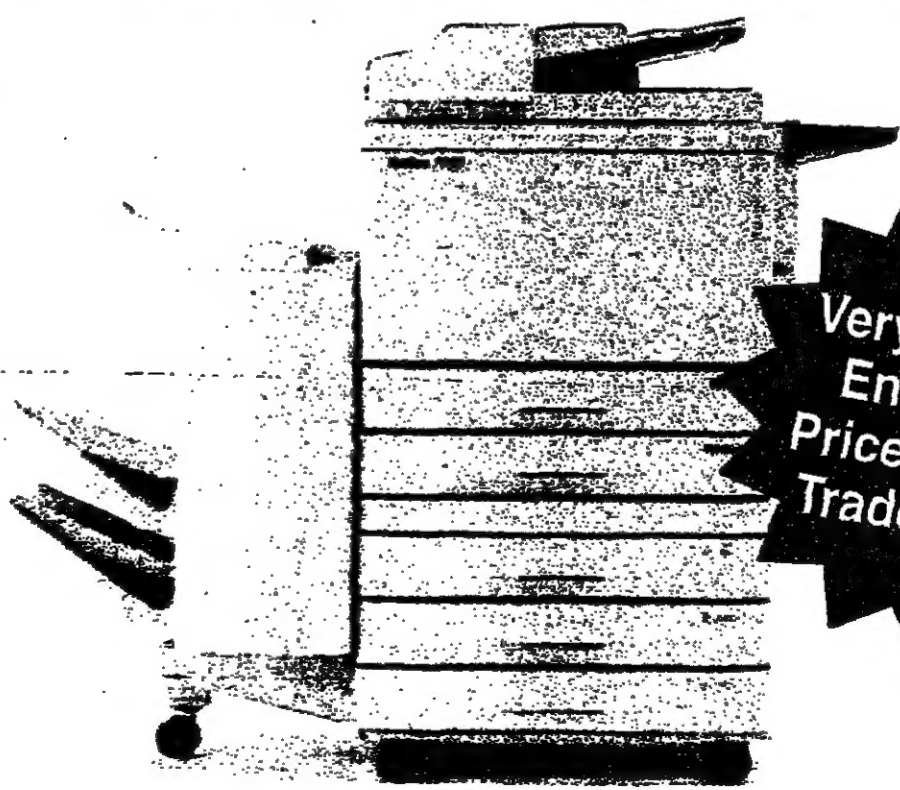
Currently the council is divided into three factions: the heads of local and regional councils, who are elected by their constituents; honorary members, such as Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, Harel, and Elyakim Ha'elzi; and the appointed leadership, such as chairman Pinhas Wallerstein, director-general Aharon Domb, and deputy director-general Shlomo Filber.

MK Rehavam Ze'evi (Moledet), a fierce opponent of Netanyahu's, agreed that the establishment of Tekuma would be a repeat of mistakes made in 1992.

In an interview with Arutz 7, he said he would prefer the consolidation of the existing right-wing parties, including Tekuma, which would run together as a joint list in the next elections.

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MKs' expenses to be curbed before elections

By LIAT COLLINS

The parliamentary pre-election spending spree might be briefer than previously thought. Knesset House Committee chairman Raphael Pinhasi (Shas) said yesterday the committee would place limits on the approved expenses for MKs in view of the upcoming elections.

Pinhasi announced the decision during a meeting in which the Knesset's budget for 1999 was approved at NIS 214 million.

The sum includes NIS 8.7 million budgeted for the rental of offices for MKs and the pur-

chase of office equipment such as computers, fax machines, mobile phones, and office furniture.

The committee noted the possibility that MKs would try to use up their budgets before the elections. MKs who are not reelected do not have to return the equipment.

Pinhasi said next week the committee would put the MKs on a "monthly allowance" within their annual budget.

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon said the 1999 Knesset budget is modest and that the Knesset will even return NIS 11 million to the Finance

Ministry this year. The ministry promised to budget the necessary sum for building another new wing to the Knesset, estimated at some NIS 40 million.

He said the plans for the new wing could be delayed by up to 18 months after the Finance Ministry ordered that the architects who planned the project be changed, after they won another tender in the government building complex, Kiryat Haleom.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister Michael Eitan accused Labor Party leader Ehud Barak and party secretary-general Ra'anan Cohen of "rob-

bing public coffers while hypocritically pretending to express concern for the weak." This follows an attempt by Barak to increase party funding by 15 percent.

Eitan noted that in 1994, party funding was increased by 33% in return for a ban on large donations to parties and their leaders.

Cohen said the law should be changed to fund candidates running for prime minister. He said that when the Direct Elections Law was passed it did not take into account the question of funding for candidates for prime minister. He accused Eitan of cynically misrepresenting his

request. Finance Committee chairman Abraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism) and the coalition coordinator on the committee, Michael Kleiner, object to funding being raised just for those parties running a candidate for prime minister, but said the Knesset could approve the 15% increase for all parties as under a special regulation, not an amendment to the law.

Kleiner said if the direct election system is later abolished then the funding would have to be reduced accordingly.

Joy a scarce commodity in Bethlehem

By BEN LYNFIELD

The banner visible yesterday near Bethlehem did not exactly radiate the spirit of goodwill to all men. "Jesus the son of Mary, we know you are silent. Show your anger on the night of Christmas," it said, signed by Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement.

While anger - against Israel and the US - is one emotion permeating Bethlehem during this post-Clinton visit, post-Iraq bombing, post-Wye Christmas, others are also palpable: depression, anticipation of making cash from tourists, more depression, and even a hint of joy.

First, the good news, or glad tidings, if you will.

According to Majid Ismail, the Palestinian Authority's director-general of tourism in Bethlehem, tourist day visits will be up slightly over last year and hotel occupancy is already exceeding last year.

Out of 1,200 rooms in Bethlehem, about 1,000 will be full for the three days beginning last night and extending through Christmas, Ismail said.

Despite political tensions and cancellations due to the bombing of Iraq, local hotels have scored gains compared with last year.

"In fact it isn't so bad here," he said. "It's not a sad Christmas."

All things considered, the PA is looking to the festivities this year, which will be helped along by six international choirs, as an opportunity to practice for next year's Bethlehem 2000 gala, planned as a landmark celebration of the millennium that will serve as a magnet for tourists and draw the international spotlight onto the Palestinians.

"We are trying to keep up the tradition and next year hopefully things will be optimal," Ismail said. But not everyone shares his upbeat assessment.

"There is no sense of anything to celebrate," said Abdallah Khader Haj, a city councillor. "We have made our preparations as usual, but the feelings of people are very sad."

The main reasons cited by Haj



Christian pilgrims light candles yesterday in Bethlehem's St. Catherine's Franciscan Church, where the annual Christmas Eve Midnight Mass will take place tonight. The church is adjacent to the Church of the Nativity. (Reuters)

and others for the sadness are solidarity with the suffering of Iraqis: a feeling of being let down and betrayed by Clinton, who ordered the bombing a day after visiting Bethlehem; and the non-release of political prisoners from Israeli jails.

Political tensions aside, Bethlehem is a mess. Its streets torn up as part of a Japanese-funded sewer-overhaul project.

The showcase Manger Square would be better termed "Mangled Square," a repository of pipes, buckets, wires, wooden planks, and bags of cement set along a partially paved pedestrian mall.

"There seems to be a lot of preparation going on here, but I'm not quite sure for what," said Norman Jacobs, a student from Brighton, England.

According to the Bethlehem 2000 planners, the square will be transformed by next year into the home of a peace center, including a Palestinian cultural center and nativity museum.

In the meantime, a former fixture in the center of the square has fallen victim to the construction: There is no Christmas tree. Officials are promising that an especially festive one will be brought in for next

year's celebrations.

In neighboring Beit Sahur, residents are preparing for the arrival of Israeli peace activists tomorrow to participate in a procession for peace in the site designated by the Greek Orthodox Church as Shepherd's Field.

"There is no enthusiasm for Christmas this year because of what happened to the Iraqi people," said Beit Sahur Deputy Mayor Atallah Rashmawi.

Rashmawi and many other residents have another reason not to feel festive: Much of the town's younger generation has emigrated in recent

years. Thus families that once spent the holiday together are apart.

"My son Jamil now lives in Michigan; this is our second Christmas without him," Rashmawi said. "We have a tree, but it's not enough. I wish I had it, but I don't feel that I am happy this Christmas."

Novelist Jamal Banoura, also a Beit Sahur resident, echoed the despair over Iraq. But he added that he and others in Beit Sahur will still find a way to experience joy. "In spite of being depressed, we try to make ourselves happy. We will be making parties and celebrating with our friends."

US Likud, Labor donors likely to come up short

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK - American Jews are bracing for an ardent courtship by Israeli politicians, who are expected to stroke their US supporters to stoke their campaign coffers following the collapse of the government.

The Israeli contenders from the Likud and Labor parties were able to raise millions of dollars from Americans in the last election campaign.

But their advances are not entirely welcome today.

"I have always been opposed to financial contributions [to Israeli election campaigns]," said Abraham Foxman, director of the Anti-Defamation League.

"There is enough money in the United States that individuals can buy [Israeli] elections. I think that is unhealthy and can hurt democracy," he said.

Foxman called for full disclosure of American financial support for Israeli candidates, but it was not certain that American Jewish benefactors have much cash on hand for Israeli candidates. Some are thought to be financially strapped after helping to pay off the expenses of the November congressional elections.

Conservatives - whether aligned with the Likud or with the American Republican Party - have been able to raise as much from a smaller group of donors as the so-called progressives, be they Labor or Democrats, one fund-raising insider said.

In addition, donors who traditionally back Labor also may be preoccupied with domestic American politics.

The most influential of the pro-

gressive Jewish philanthropists also were "Jews for Clinton," who may be distracted by the impeachment proceedings against the president, now moving to a Senate trial.

That, though, was minimized by Steve Rabinowitz, a Washington strategist who is active in national Democratic politics, and who also coordinated Ehud Barak's last visit to Washington.

"I don't think [Israeli fund-raising] has been affected by impeachment either psychologically or financially," Rabinowitz said. "Impeachment hasn't dried up any progressive Jewish money."

It was not clear what public role American Jews and their organizations would assume in the next few months, although Foxman and others called for civility.

"I know there have to be lines in the sand, but where they are, I cannot describe," said one key American Jewish leader. "Where is the line between expressing an opinion, which we have the right to do, and undue influence?"

"One of the things that the American Jewish community feels is polarization," said Foxman.

"I think it is important to ensure that we don't export it," he said.

He offered no specific plan to curb American Jewish activity in the Israeli elections.

"We should be observers, not participants," he said. "Unfettered support of extremism here can have dire consequences there, while here we would just write an editorial saying that we are wrong."

Yisrael Ba'aliya not worried by Lieberman leading new immigrant party

By LIAT COLLINS

Yisrael Ba'aliya is scheduled to meet today to discuss its strategy and campaign in the upcoming elections, as well as how the party will choose its candidates. There is no doubt that the list will be headed by Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, party whip Roman Bronfman said yesterday.

He would not predict how many mandates Yisrael Ba'aliya would receive, but said he is not worried by reports that Avigdor Lieberman, former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, intends to establish and lead a separate immigrant party.

Yisrael Ba'aliya won deputy majorities in 18 councils in the recent municipal elections.

"I want to remind people that in

1996 [then Likud MK] Ephraim Gur, with many ambitions and much money and energy, entered the election campaign [with his own immigrant list] and came out of it empty handed."

Bronfman said he believes Lieberman will stay in the Likud, particularly after Dan Meridor has left and Zeev (Benny) Begin shows signs of leaving. "The atmosphere would be much more comfortable for him, and he could easily get in at one of the top 10 slots."

He said Lieberman is using the rumors that he will create his own party as a whip against the Likud.

"In the meantime we are talking about a myth. We don't know the party's platform; whether it will run on a communal or general, national list; we don't know its composition of candidates. All we

have right now is talk and media hype. We will relate to it when it becomes relevant, and then we will also be able to see in what way it is better than Yisrael Ba'aliya," Bronfman said.

Bronfman noted that former OC Intelligence Uri Saguy had categorically denied reports he would be in the No. 2 slot on Lieberman's list.

He said he is accepts it as natural that all the large parties will include immigrant candidates.

"Today, one in five Israelis is an immigrant from the former Soviet Union and it is clear the Russian vote will be a decisive factor."

He said these immigrant candidates will take some voters from Yisrael Ba'aliya, "but it is because of us that other parties have included them."

Bronfman said all parties, including Yisrael Ba'aliya, are moving from security-national ideology toward social issues, such as separating religion from state.

"Yisrael Ba'aliya is also in transition, because it is a party established by immigrants, but aspires to integration, not isolation. So in one or two Knessets, we will be become different, hopefully something moderate and pluralistic."

Sofia Nimelstein, a Meretz councillor in Holon and active in trying to attract the immigrant vote to her party, said that if Lieberman runs it will seriously affect Yisrael Ba'aliya. She also rejected the image of the "Russian voter" as right wing and said there are also many issues, such as religious pluralism, in which her party has the advantage.

MK Solodkin slams Meridor for anti-immigrant slurs

'It was an insult to all immigrants, old and new'

By LIAT COLLINS

Yisrael Ba'aliya MK Marina Solodkin has complained about the way Likud MK Dan Meridor referred in his breakthrough speech on Tuesday to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as "a man who came to Israel 10 years ago [and] took over the party."

"This is an absolutely old elitist expression and approach," said Solodkin. "It shows an approach belittling anybody who did not live here all their lives and implies they don't have the right to succeed. I felt it was an insult to all immigrants - old and new - no matter where they came from," she said.

Although Netanyahu is not an immigrant, Meridor related to him as someone who has no rights because he did not grow up here, she said.

"When I heard him I felt he was also saying that [Yisrael Ba'aliya leader and Industry and Trade Minister] Natan Sharansky also had no right to be a party head. And I wasn't alone. I received phone calls from people saying that because of statements like that, Sharansky should run for prime minister against people like Meridor."

"I think Meridor's statement shows the same basic attitude ... as when [Labor MK Ori] Orr insulted English-speakers and

did not make a fuss until he insulted Sephardi old-timers. Meridor's comment passed quietly, but it showed how he thinks," Solodkin said.

In September 1996, Orr said on Israel Radio that Netanyahu placed too much trust in English-speakers "instead of consulting with those who speak army-Hebrew, who are found in the field and know what's going on."

Although that comment was aimed at the prime minister's English-speaking staff, then-political adviser and current ambassador to the UN Dore Gold and media adviser David Bar-Ilan, Solodkin said it reflected the attitude towards all immigrants.

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There is an illness in Israeli politics and the public is looking for messiahs, MK Tamar Gozansky (Hadash) said yesterday.

"Why are Israelis looking for messiahs? The problem is that people with no record of public civilian service are offering themselves to the public as saviors. It could be Amnon Lipkin-Shahak or Pinna Rosenblum," Gozansky said, during a debate on early elections.

It started with Benjamin Netanyahu and is continuing, she said.

"I want to warn the Israeli public against politicians who offer instant solutions," she added.

Bill would separate violent family members

Domestic violence suspects could be remanded for seven days to prepare an indictment, as long as there is sufficient evidence against them, according to a bill passed in preliminary reading yesterday.

The suspect would then immediately face a trial.

The bill, sponsored by coalition chairman Meir Sheetrit and opposition chairman Elie Goldschmidt, is aimed at protecting families against violent offenders, who under this arrangement would not be released back to their families before going on trial.

Up with the shekel

All prices of all goods, services, and real estate would have to be priced only according to the shekel, according to a bill passed unanimously in preliminary reading.

The bill's sponsor, Michael Nudelman, (Yisrael Ba'aliya), said that if all prices were in shekels, inflation could be halted and the cost of living would not soar as it has done recently.

AT THE KNESSET

By MIRIAM GILBERT

"Israel decided recently to take steps to make the shekel a convertible currency. The time has come to

finally release the economy from dependence on other currencies, especially the US dollar," he said.

A price in dollars, he said, also makes the product appear cheaper, and thus creates a consumer protection problem.

Cars for welfare recipients

People who receive welfare subsidies would not have to sell their cars, as long as the vehicles have small engines and are at least five years old, according to a bill passed in first reading yesterday.

The bill's sponsors, Yisrael Ba'aliya MKs Yuri Stern and Michael Nudelman said that having a car is necessary in many

cases to help find a job, and there is no reason for people on welfare to be burdened with additional hardship.

Masks for foreign workers

Employers would have to buy gas masks for foreign workers, under a bill passed in preliminary reading yesterday.

MK Dalia Itzik (Labor) said she hopes her initiative would "once and for all" solve the problem of providing gas masks for foreign workers.

"It is not conceivable that hundreds of thousands of people we bring to the country should be in danger. The country must know that it can't only depend on these people, but must also care for them if necessary," she said.

She said the legislation is the best solution because the state would not have to foot the bill for the masks.

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in brief

the committee on January 5 to give their version of events, and that MWU officials believe that "we took many steps from the time the bridge collapsed until today to demonstrate our support" for the victims. He said some MWU officials had stepped down, including Yoram Eyal, who was chairman of the organizing committee.

Committee chairman Micha Goldman rejected this, however, and said Eyal had simply been involved in an MWU "game of musical chairs." Goldman said the committee called on the two "to suspend themselves.... There has been no feedback in Australia that a step has been taken here which shows Maccabi people have taken administrative responsibility for what happened.

"Nothing is more important than this being done, so that we can send a message back to these families that this has found expression here," Goldman said. "We are not a court of law, but the humane and public side requires that this be done."

Elli Wohlgeleerner

4E

Heidi J. Gleitsman

from

Deutsche Press Agency

Norway has strict laws regulating names, including lists of acceptable first and last names. In mid-1995, Larsen tried to register her son's name as Gesher at her local county office, which rejected the choice as illegal. Larsen, a devout Christian, lost repeated appeals.

She was ordered to change the name, pay a 1,600 kroner (NIS 880) fine or spend two days in

Christmas, but I didn't let them scare me," she was quoted as saying.

It was not clear whether anyone else in Norway had been ever imprisoned for violating the name laws, or what the final outcome of the dispute will be, according to the Norwegian Justice Ministry.

For the time being, the child, now four, still is named Gesher.

The students said anti-Israel marches by Moslem groups, particularly at Witwatersrand University, are increasing. "On Yom Kippur, Moslem activists put

apartment of three Christian women in Mea She'arim, allegedly because they were believed to be proselytizing, which took place a day after election day.

Yesterday, Jerusalem District Court Judge Michaela Shidlovsky-Or ordered the three suspects charged in the crime - Yehoshua Shmuel Weiss, 27, Aaron Kornblatt, 37, and a 16-year-old - be remanded until the end of proceedings because they constitute a danger to public safety.

On November 21, the apartment of Ben-Zion Karni on Rehov Shmuel Hanavi was torched by two religious neighbors, Elad Levi, 21 and David Yisraeli, 18, who said that they wanted to burn the apartment because Karni drove on Shabbat, played music loudly, and flirted with religious girls who passed by.

According to police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby, the Eda Haredit was approached about the incidents.

"We told them to repudiate the phenomenon of what's taking place in Mea She'arim, and to tell those haredim to stop being unruly, and that all signs of violence or hooliganism should cease. We demanded that of them... and they asked us to be involved in the fight against missionaries."

Municipality spokesman Hagai Elias said the increase in incidents "is just a coincidence. The only religious party to increase seats [on the council] was Shas, and they are not the people who demonstrate against Shabbat violators or attack others for not keeping the Shabbat in their neighborhoods."

Naomi Chazan

He added that Hamas has established an office in Johannesburg, which helps train Moslem activists on campus along with members of PAGAD (People Against Gangsterism and Drugs). Myers said that organization claims to

Chazan said she is "troubled by the attempt to equate Zionism with racism, which is obscene and abominable, which in itself is a manifestation of racism. But to

It called for a stepped-up Foreign Ministry information campaign among the students to

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On bombing Iraq

What do the bombing of Iraq, the impeachment of US President Bill Clinton, and the fall of Israel's government have in common?

They are all attempts, by very different means, to overthrow a country's chief executive. Ironically, at the very moment Clinton bombed Iraq's Republican Guard in Baghdad, his own opposition Republican guard strafed him in Washington. Now Iraqi President Saddam Hussein can boast that he will outlast Clinton just as he survived president George Bush.

It's hard to admit, but I too have my doubts about the US policy toward Iraq. A journalist who telephoned for my opinion on the issue concluded the interview by saying, "Now I see. The bombing was bad because it was ineffective." He was already against the action and was just searching for the best rationale for opposing it.

I, however, wasn't so sure. Certainly, the US had to prove its credibility and inflict some cost for Saddam's violations.

Moreover, many leaders — especially those in the Arab world — want both to enjoy the benefits of a tough US policy on Iraq and to criticize it.

And yet, all things considered, is this really the best strategy for the US?

Let's review the rules of the US-Iraq confrontation, a framework that many policymakers and journalists still don't understand. Saddam Hussein is absolutely determined not to give up his weapons of mass destruction, no matter what the cost. He also knows that the additional damage the US can inflict on him is minimal. After all, the bombing will only go on for a few days and then end. Saddam need merely sit tight, wait out the American offensive, and declare victory.

The simple fact is, though many refuse to face it, that the chance to get rid of Saddam was thrown away in 1991. Once Bush failed to achieve that goal, it was simply not going to happen.

Small-scale measures — bombing or subversion — will not suffice. Saddam is neither going to be impeached nor lose a parliamentary vote of confidence.

Equally, there is no chance of the US committing hundreds of thousands of troops to make up for stupid decisions of almost a decade ago. Of course, the US could in theory destroy Iraq, but it did not do so in 1991 and it is not going to do so now.

In short, Saddam knows that after a few nights the laser-guided rockets' red glare will subside, the smart bombs will stop bursting in air, and his flag will still be there. So why

should he make concessions?

And then, of course, the United Nations and other mediators are once again running to Baghdad to find out what concessions Iraq will deign to accept in exchange for "pretty please" letting the inspectors return. Iraq is transformed in appearance from aggressor to victim. Ambassador Richard Butler's report on the Iraqi violations that triggered the whole confrontation is forgotten. Equally misunderstood is that the real political consideration for the Clinton administration's timing was not impeachment but past experience in trying to mobilize international support.

In each previous confrontation, the US waited in hopes of building up a broad coalition. Precisely the opposite happened: as weeks went by, opposition to an attack grew and the White House had to back down. This time they struck quickly to avoid the

problem, yet still had to face post-operation condemnations.

US officials now talk of keeping Saddam in his box, and of teaching him a lesson.

Does anyone really believe — as this column has predicted after earlier confrontations — that we won't go through the same thing in another three to four months?

Consequently, while there is no solution to this problem, there is a better alternative strategy. It would be preferable to put all efforts into maintaining sanctions as long as possible. As long as Iraq faces these restrictions, no amount of cheating and smuggling will enable it to rebuild forces and mass-destruction arsenals.

Evidence of Saddam's misbehavior is better used, not as a reason for attacking him (which seems to cancel out his previous misdeeds) but as evidence — even to his Chinese, French, and Russian sympathizers — that he deserves no respite.

If they want to end sanctions, let them persuade Iraq to change its behavior. The burden of proof, is on Iraq to show itself to be in compliance, not on the US, to prove that a bombing campaign is justified.

There is, of course, a legitimate difference of opinion on these alternatives. But the bottom line is: Why engage in a policy one knows won't work, in which a victory is merely a few more weeks of limited, harassed inspection after Saddam has hidden all his unholy treasures?

US policy is well-intentioned and continues to take seriously Iraq's tremendous potential threat to the region. But the point is to keep the threat purely potential. The US is capable of finding a better policy to counter Iraq.

The Region



Barry Rubin

Donations pour in for octuplets.

The world's only surviving octuplets are still in critical condition but Houston's Nigerian community is making sure they will not be wanting once they leave the hospital

By CLAUDIA KOLKER

Long before she gave birth to the world's only surviving octuplets, Nkem Chukwu surely knew the adage, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Coined in her native Nigeria, the expression accurately describes her childhood in a family compound where a host of relatives raised Chukwu and her siblings, a relative says.

Thousands of miles away this week, both the US community at large and Nigeria's highly organized emigre network are offering the family another kind of help.

Chukwu, 27, is recuperating at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston, Texas, while her eight babies remain in critical but stable condition.

Soon after she gave birth, hospital administrators set up a command center staffed by 20 people to handle calls and offers of help.

Among the donations so far: as-long-as-needed supplies of diapers (from an anonymous donor), of baby wipes (from a company that manufactures them), and of disposable training pants; a year's supply of food from a local grocery store; a year's supply of formula; and a shipment of early childhood educational supplies.

Meanwhile, Houston's vibrant Nigerian community, estimated at 50,000 people, is setting its own assistance mechanisms in motion. Houston's *USAfrica* newspaper has launched the most ambitious fund, the *USAfrica* Children's Support Network.

While making a special call to the nation's African and African-American citizens, editor Chido Nwangu urged participation from "everyone who wishes those kids well."

Chaired by Houston church and medical leaders, the fund is designed not only to raise cash, but to develop a psychological support network for the family, including volunteer child care. Grass-root immigrant groups also are starting fund-raising efforts.

"OUR family is very excited, and grateful to God," the father, Iyke Louis Udobi, 41, said Tuesday. Houston's Nigerians partake in an array of mutual assistance clubs that often raise money for community members in need.

Based on tribal affiliation, ancestral villages, gender, age group, or elder status, such groups can raise thousands of dollars and plan to start fund raising for the family, said Dr. Nkwunife Muoneke, a mathematics professor who belongs to the same Igbo ethnic group as the family.

"Fund raising is going to be started by a group the mother belongs to, or a group from her town, or her local (tribal) government," he said. Not only club members, but all members of the larger tribal group are expected to pitch in, he added.

early. The smallest was a girl weighing only about 300 grams. Largely comprised of professionals who sought higher education here in the late 1970s, Houston's Nigerians partake in an array of mutual assistance clubs that often raise money for community members in need.

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The first baby was born December 8, 15 weeks premature. Her two brothers and five sisters, who followed by Caesarean section Sunday, were born 13 weeks



Oni Chukwu, carrying eight balloons, walks through Texas Children's Hospital on Monday to see his sister, Nkem Chukwu, who gave birth to octuplets in Houston. All eight will likely be hospitalized for two to three months. (AP)

TRADITIONALLY, Muoneke said, Nigerians hold large fund-raising parties, full of ceremony and dance, to celebrate the birth of a child. Part of the ceremony includes a close relative dancing with the infant in the center of the festivities, while guests fling bills all around them.

While community members say they expect similar festivities when the babies are no longer in medical crises, they also noted that the couple have kept a low profile in the community.

The father is a respiratory therapist and part-time real estate agent while Chukwu has been studying computer science.

Nevertheless, community leaders who have had contact with them said the couple, who have not been available for interviews, are perceived as being highly traditional.

"They speak Igbo at home, and have their mother here," said

Muoneke, who has run into the couple at Nigerian social events. Nigerians, including himself, often bring their mothers to live with them in the US in order to pass on cultural education to American-born grandchildren, he said.

Houstonian Stephen Udeh, a relative of Nkem Chukwu, said she had had a traditional upbringing before coming to the US about five years ago.

"She came from a very large family... used to having a lot of brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins around, in a very big compound," he said.

Abel Udeh, another relative in Houston, added, "They will be raised as Americans, but they will learn the customs and traditions of Nigeria. I don't know how they will manage, but everyone wants to help," Udeh said. "In Nigeria, we believe in an extended family."

PAST parents of multiple birth have experienced distinctly varied

public responses. Bobbi and Kenny McCaughey of Carlisle, Iowa, were deluged with donations after their septuplets were born last year. In addition to funds, a van, and lifetime supplies of diapers and baby-care products, they received a huge house.

But in Washington, D.C., Jacqueline and Lindon Thompson were virtually ignored for six months after the May 1997 births of their sextuplets.

A newspaper story contrasting the experience of the black family to the McCaugheys prompted a stream of donations, including a six-bedroom house, a van and free day care.

Chukwu is expected to be released from the hospital in about a week, while her children are likely to remain hospitalized for up to three months. The cost of medical care has been estimated at \$250,000 per child.

(Los Angeles Times)

YASSIN

Continued from Page 1

"This issue has been under discussion for a long time," Abu Midein said.

"He is handicapped and has to move to hospital. We have been discussing this for two weeks, because we respect this man and we think he's moderate," Abu Midein said.

Yesterday's step does not mean the PA will lessen efforts to stop Hamas attacks against Israel, Abu Midein said. "We will prevent this by all means and never

go back to violence against civilians. Our message to Hamas is that this is our choice."

Abu Midein indicated that releases of Hamas detainees could begin soon.

"Before Ramadan ends, we have to do something to build confidence with Hamas and prove that the only way is peace," he said.

David Bar-Illan, Netanyahu's communications adviser, told him that the freeing of Yassin is an example of what he called "the revolving door system of releasing prisoners, which goes against the Wye agreement."

RETALIATE

Continued from Page 1

Annan urged "the parties concerned to put an end to the violence and in particular to respect the noncombatant status of civilians," the spokesman said.

Funerals were held in Lebanon yesterday for all those killed in the air raid, with Hizbullah making the most out of the propaganda and issuing statements saying that its Katyusha rocket retaliation was justified.

Thousands of people participated in the funeral service, chanting

slogans condemning Israel as the enemy of Moslems and denouncing the US and especially President Bill Clinton, who was described as a "sexual pervert."

Syria condemned what it described as Israel's aggression as evidenced by the air raid, which the Lebanese government and Hizbullah both termed a blatant violation of the Grapes of Wrath understandings.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai visited Kiryat Shmona separately and on his own, unlike Netanyahu, who was accompanied by other ministers, including Moshe Katsav, Avigdor Kahalani, Rafael Eitan, Yehoshua Matza, and Eli Suissa, as well as newly installed Likud MK Doron

Shmueli.

Mordechai stressed that Hizbullah's rocket attack on the Galilee was itself a blatant breach of the Grapes of Wrath understandings, because it was intended to hit civilians.

He said that the IAF raid had aimed at clear Hizbullah targets in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, but a breakdown occurred. "The IAF carries out hundreds of strikes and activities in different places and sometimes there are breakdowns," said Mordechai.

President Ezer Weizman and his wife, Reuma, also visited the areas hit in the Katyusha barrage yesterday. Weizman said it is necessary to find a solution to the Lebanon problem, but this would have to involve the Syrians.

Most of those hurt in the rocket attacks were lightly wounded and all but four were allowed to return to their homes after treatment. One man was hit in the chest by shrapnel when a rocket exploded in his carpentry shop in a Galilee Panhandle community near Kiryat Shmona. His condition in Safed's Rebecca Sieff Hospital was described as satisfactory.

A number of homes and vehicles were hit in the rocket attack and power lines were temporarily disabled until repairs were carried out by Israel Electric Corporation workers.

The biggest damage, however, was to lost income. Production was hit because workers had to stay in bomb shelters instead of

going to work. Thousands of cancellations were registered by hoteliers and guest house owners at tourist spots in the North.

Nevertheless, Hizbullah's response yesterday to the deaths of Lebanese civilians was, according to some Lebanese analysts, relatively restrained and well controlled — indicating that the organization wants to continue with the Grapes of Wrath understandings.

They noted that the organization had fired about 30 rockets at the Galilee and had ceased immediately after the attacks. The IDF's response, said the analysts, was also relatively muted, indicating that both sides were anxious to avoid an escalation.

AP contributed to this report.

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SHAHAK

Continued from Page 1

Meridor is holding a large rally this evening and is to launch his campaign on Sunday.

Meridor met with former Tel Aviv mayor Ronni Milo for lunch in Jerusalem yesterday, and the two discussed cooperation in the elections and the future of a centrist political party.

Milo said before the meeting that the lunch was planned before Meridor announced his candidacy. The two of them, Milo said, "concluded that we'll cooperate, that we'll work together. That was the original program from the time that I established a centrist party six months ago."

Milo said he hopes that Shahak would join them in the party, "at whose head will be the person who has the best chance of winning the elections. We said that at the beginning: this is the understanding between us." Milo added that there would be only one centrist party.

Olmert told Channel 1 yesterday: "For someone like me, who was among the Likud's founders and served in the Knesset 25 years for

the Likud, to see the fighting, the anger, the despair, the disappointment and even the contempt, within the Likud and toward it, it's almost a personal crisis. A person cannot remain indifferent to it. And I'm thinking all kinds of thoughts... When I have something to announce, I'll say it."

After seeing Livnat, he met with MK Uzi Landau, who assured him of his support, and spoke to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon on the telephone.

Olmert is due to meet with Mordechai today in an effort to secure his support, which he considers crucial to his campaign against Netanyahu.

Mordechai, who is reportedly considering leaving the Likud, said this week he would consider his moves and make them clear soon.

MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) strongly criticized Olmert's apparent intention to run for prime minister despite his pledge during the local election campaign that he would serve five years as mayor.

Netanyahu said yesterday that anyone who wants to contend for

the party's leadership may do so, "on condition they accept the rule that they must support whoever wins the election. Another condition is that this is a fair campaign — and I hope a short one."

He and his aides planned to pass a resolution at the Likud's central committee meeting on Sunday to hold the party's leadership showdown on January 18.

But Netanyahu's opponents, perceiving this to be a trick to catch potential candidates unprepared, strongly opposed it and it was agreed to put the vote off until January 25.

The collapse in Likud ranks is filtering down to the activists, who are regrouping and switching their alliances.

"I think Netanyahu failed as prime minister and Likud leader,"

party veteran Gaston Malka said. "All the MKs and ministers have deserted him. He's totally wrecked the Likud. Try calling party headquarters, nobody there will even talk to you. If he wins the party leadership again, I will have no choice but to leave the Likud."

Mordechai, on the other hand, is an excellent, moderate leader who can bring [Ze'ev] Benny Begin and Meridor back to the Likud."

Another prominent activist, Yitzhak Regev, said that "the Likud princes have always eaten from silver spoons. If Mordechai wants to run, fine, but only Netanyahu can bring the Likud victory and be prime minister again. He's a superb prime minister."

Elli Wohlgelemer and Liat Collins contributed to this report.

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Iraq bans UN flights

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq banned United Nations civilian flights from the country without explanation yesterday, days after US and British air strikes.

The Iraqi decision came as about 100 UN relief staff resumed humanitarian work under an oil-for-food program and Iraqis began rebuilding damaged buildings, schools and hospitals in Baghdad.

UN sources said special envoy Prakash Shah was supposed to fly out of Iraq to go on holiday on a UN flight that had been expected at Habbaniya airport, 100 km northwest of Baghdad.

Yesterday's flight was commissioned by the UN Iraq Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM). UNIKOM observers patrol a demilitarized zone on the Iraq-Kuwait border established after the eviction of Iraqi troops from Kuwait during the 1991 Gulf War. "The Iraqis told us that all UN flights are banned until further notice," one source told Reuters. "A UN plane was expected in Habbaniya airport to take envoy Shah but it was not allowed to land."

The sources said no reason was given to them by the Iraqis and one hoped it was a temporary arrangement. There was no immediate comment on the report from the Iraqi officials, who had said that Iraq was still on alert as attacks could resume.

UN civilian planes fly into Habbaniya on a regular basis. Commercial flights to Iraq are banned as part of stringent UN sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Shah later left Baghdad for Amman by car to fly to an undisclosed destination.

A UN spokesman said 93 work-

ers returned Tuesday night and hours later resumed their humanitarian work disrupted by the attacks. He said 100 trucks full of humanitarian goods were being unloaded.

The team would also assess the impact of the military campaign on facilities of the food-for-oil program and the needs of Iraqis outside the program, the spokesman said.

The UN staff had left Baghdad for Jordan on Friday during the US and British air strikes after their UN base was rocked for two consecutive nights by attacks nearby.

UN humanitarian staff have been working in Iraq overseeing distribution of food and medicine bought under Baghdad's oil-for-food deal, which is aimed at offsetting the worst effects of the eight-year-old economic sanctions.

Iraq has been allowed to sell oil worth \$5.2 billion every six months to buy essentials for its 24 million population.

A large-scale reconstruction campaign was under way in Baghdad and other areas of the country targeted by the air raids.

In Baghdad hundreds of workers, backed by bulldozers and cranes, were repairing houses, schools and hospitals damaged by nearby cruise missile blasts.

The Iraqi press demanded that the UN Security Council punish the US and Britain for attacking Iraq and said the two countries should pay compensation to Baghdad.

"If the United Nations respects itself and its member states...it should punish America and Britain for their military aggression," the ruling Baath Party newspaper *Al-Thawra* said.



Michael Stone, a pro-British Loyalist who killed three Catholics and wounded 60 in a 1988 attack on an IRA funeral, is released on a 10-day Christmas parole yesterday. (AP)

Northern Ireland prisoners get Christmas parole

BELFAST (AP) - A protester handcuffed herself to the exit of the Maze Prison yesterday, prepared for a confrontation with the man who killed her parents and eight other people.

But Irish Republican Army bomber Sean Kelly, one of 170 prisoners receiving a 10-day Christmas release, left through a staff door.

"Kelly is an even bigger murdering coward than I thought he was," Michelle Williamson said when she heard he had eluded her.

Kelly is serving a life sentence for killing her parents, George and Gillian Williamson, and eight other people with a bomb in a Belfast shop in 1993.

Most of the prisoners walked out through a nearby door, avoiding Ms. Williamson, and Kelly was released at the opposite end of the prison.

Christmas home leave for prisoners has become a tradition in Northern Ireland, established long before the peace agreement in April and cease-fires by the main paramilitary groups. The prisoners on both sides of the conflict have returned voluntarily to jail since the experiment began in the late 1980s.

Michael Stone, a pro-British

Loyalist who killed three Catholics and wounded 60 in a 1988 attack on an IRA funeral, was one of those released yesterday.

Also on temporary release is Johnny Adair, commander of the outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters, who began serving a 16-year sentence in 1995 for directing the random slayings of Catholics.

WORLD

in brief

Turkish president designates next premier

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) - President Suleyman Demirel yesterday asked an independent lawmaker Yilmaz Erez, the industry and trade minister, to form a new government, after veteran leftist leader Mesut Yilmaz failed to gather enough support in parliament.

Erez told reporters he would search for consensus, saying, "I am at an equal distance to all of the parties. Today is not a day for political squabbles and small political calculations. Turkey has no more patience for a government crisis." The government of Yilmaz, who is now acting premier, collapsed last month in a vote of no-confidence over a corruption scandal.

US expels three Cuban diplomats at UN

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The US said yesterday it had ordered three Cuban diplomats stationed at the UN to leave the country for activities "incompatible" with their diplomatic mission. US officials did not give any details, but "incompatible activities" is diplomatic language for espionage. The expulsions are thought to be related to the arrest and trial of 10 alleged Cuban spies in Florida in September.

A US diplomatic source in New York said the three Cuban diplomats were given until Monday to leave the US. He said the diplomats were Eduardo Martinez Borbonet, a first secretary; Roberto Azanza Paez, a third secretary; and Gonzalo Fernandez Garay, an attaché.

Official: Russia has found investor for Mir

MOSCOW (AP) - Russia has found a private investor to keep the aging Mir space station in orbit for three more years, officials announced yesterday. Russia has been under intense international criticism for continuing to spend money on the Mir even as the country's economic problems have caused repeated delays in the construction of the international space station.

Officials didn't identify today the new private investor or say how much money they hoped to secure. However, Yuri Semyonov, the chief of Russia's Energia space company, said the government is drafting a document that would provide guarantees for the Mir investment and that a funding agreement would be signed once the document is completed.

VW makes 1st payments to former slave laborers

HAMBURG (AP) - A fund set up this year by Volkswagen to compensate its former slave laborers from the Nazi era has made its first payments, the German automaker said yesterday.

The DM 20 million fund transferred DM 10,000 marks each to 17 former slave laborers in Poland and 31 in the Netherlands, it said. The fund, directed by former prime minister Shimon Peres, recently took out advertisements

in 22 countries publicizing the fund and how to apply.

VW estimates 17,000 forced laborers worked in its factories from 1941 to the end of World War II, although others charge the number was much higher.

Most German firms had refused to honor back wage claims, arguing the workers were forced on them by the Nazis, thus the current government, as legal successor to the Nazi regime, should be responsible.

Democrats: Not enough votes to oust Clinton

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - An informal Senate poll conducted by the Democratic leader yesterday showed support for removing President Bill Clinton from office is short of the two-thirds majority required under the Constitution. A total of 67 senators would be needed to find him guilty of the two articles of impeachment approved by the House of Representatives alleging perjury and obstruction of justice in his handling of the Monica Lewinsky affair.

A spokesperson for Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said he had been canvassing Senate sentiment and found support for removal short of that number.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, a Connecticut Democrat, said on NBC's *Today* show that, despite the holiday season, senators are trying to resolve the issue quickly.

"At this point, based on some of the public statements...there's not the votes here to convict on impeachment, that there are a strong sentiment for censure," Dodd said. "And if that's the case, why put the country through a trial which isn't going to result in a conviction?"

Rep. Lee Hamilton, an Indiana Democrat, said in an interview he had been talking with moderate Republicans and they insisted on two preconditions for a censure settlement - that Clinton acknowledge he lied and then pay some damages.

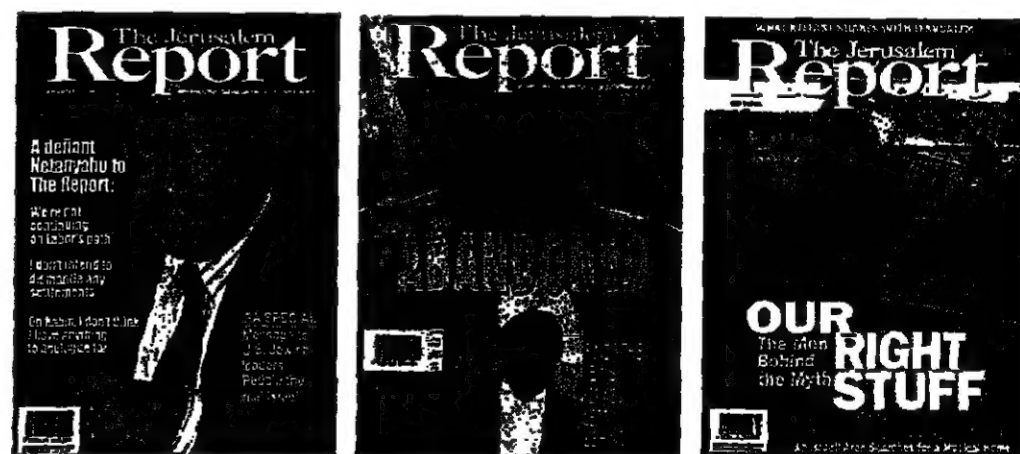
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Peter Mandelson (AP)

British trade secretary resigns

LONDON (AP) - Britain's trade and industry secretary resigned yesterday, one day after *The Guardian* newspaper disclosed that he received a \$625,000 home loan from a fellow Labor legislator whose business interests are the subject of two of his department's investigations.

Peter Mandelson, 45, one of the leading strategists of Labor's 1997 landslide election victory, said in a resignation letter to Prime Minister Tony Blair, "I should not, with all candor, have entered into the arrangement."

Geoffrey Robinson, the fellow legislator who was paymaster-general, resigned as well.

"I should have told you and other colleagues whose advice I value and I should have told my permanent secretary (the senior civil servant in the department) on learning of the inquiry into Geoffrey Robinson, although I entirely stood aside from this," Mandelson wrote.

It was the second resignation from Blair's cabinet. Welsh Secretary Ron Davies resigned in November, after he was robbed in a London area known for homosexual cruising.

Mandelson did not disclose the loan when he was appointed trade secretary earlier this year, and informed Blair of the loan last week. *The Guardian* said.

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Open the Lebanese track

As if President Bill Clinton's visit, his impeachment, the attack on Iraq, the fall of the Israeli government, and the fragmentation of Israeli politics were not enough, the matter of Lebanon is demanding its fair share of attention. This time, the tragedy has befallen a Lebanese family, whose home was 300 meters from a Hizbullah installation targeted by Israeli aircraft. A 40-year-old woman and six of her children died due to the IAF's error, for which Israel has publicly apologized.

Though Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai warned Hizbullah not to "disrupt life in the North, because we will take all necessary measures," some analysts have noted that the relative silence leaves the impression that Israel accepts that Hizbullah's Katyusha rockets will rain down upon civilians in the North following such an incident. Residents were ordered by the IDF to spend Tuesday night in their shelters in anticipation of attacks. Dozens of Katyushas were fired upon northern towns yesterday morning, wounding 12 Israeli civilians.

Mordechai rightly called these rocket attacks a violation of the Operation Grapes of Wrath understandings, under which neither side would target civilian areas. He distinguished between the Israeli action, which mistakenly killed civilians, but was clearly aimed at a military target, and the Hizbullah action, which deliberately targeted civilians and seemed timed to catch them on their way to work and school. This distinction between the deliberate and accidental killing of civilians is critical to maintain, and Mordechai should not be the only one making it. Moreover, there is the larger question of responsibility for the war in Lebanon as a whole, of which inadvertent civilian casualties are a tragic part.

Though the question of Israel's presence in Lebanon is now hotly debated, there is no disputing that it is not the result of Israel's desire to occupy territory, but a matter of self-defense. Even those who advocate a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon disagree with the effectiveness of the security zone, not its legitimacy or justification. Nor do they anticipate an end to Israel's military involvement, but that military operations be launched from inside the northern border, rather than maintaining the security zone.

Unilateral withdrawal advocate MK Yossi Beilin (Labor) argues that yesterday's Katyusha attacks prove once again that the security zone is failing to keep the North safe, and that the

fight with Hizbullah is endangering not only Israeli soldiers, but the civilians in the North. But even Beilin is not sure if Hizbullah will end its war against Israel following a unilateral withdrawal. Further, Beilin argues that Israeli ground and air operations would continue if necessary following a withdrawal.

The prescription for a unilateral withdrawal, therefore, does not provide a panacea against civilian casualties on both sides of the border. Only an end to the war can do that. Accordingly, the overarching responsibility for all casualties, military and civilian, lies with those who started and fuel the war in Lebanon. Ironically, the two nations that bear the primary blame for the continuation of the Lebanese conflict - Syria and Iran - pay no price, not even a serious diplomatic one, for sowing death in this region.

That said, the Israeli government bears a responsibility to actively pursue its sensible diplomatic initiative, under which some combination of international forces and guarantees would replace Israel's presence in Lebanon. Once again, the frenzy of statements and meetings that followed two weeks of higher-than-normal Israeli casualties in Lebanon has dissipated, with nothing to show for it.

Despite the beginning of election season, the government should vigorously press the United States, France, and in the United Nations for a resolution to the Lebanese problem. The main obstacle is the tacit acceptance by these powers of Syria's cynical policy of blocking an Israeli withdrawal by refusing to allow the Lebanese to police their own border. If the US and France were to challenge Syria to facilitate, rather than thwart, the end of Israel's unwanted occupation of a fellow Arab country, it is hard to see on what basis Syria could refuse. Certainly, at a time when Syria refuses to return to the negotiating table with Israel, there is no excuse for playing into Syrian hands by keeping the Lebanese track tightly closed.

Even those who believe that the Lebanese morass cannot be resolved outside of a comprehensive Syrian-Israeli deal should favor pressing for a Lebanese deal immediately. If this Syrian-Lebanese linkage, however illegitimate, is considered a given, the Syrians should be given a choice: either negotiate over Lebanon now, or accept Israel's standing offer for unconditional, direct talks. Continued Syrian intransigence and proxy warfare should not be an option.

The View From the East

DAUD KUTTAB

'Ramadan Karim'

Ramadan is a special month in Islam. While devout Moslems refrain from eating, smoking, drinking and copulation from sunset to sunrise this month, socially, this holy month is special for all Arabs, Moslem or Christian.

Life takes on a different perspective in this month. Work conditions are different: People work

On the first day of Ramadan, Clinton gave a passionate statement congratulating Moslems on this holy month and expressing what he called America's genuine admiration for the fastest-growing religion in America. Clinton even ended his statement with the common Ramadan greeting "Ramadan Karim" ("a prosperous Ramadan").

All-day fasting is supposed to strengthen believers' faith and patience. The Palestinians will need lots of both

less hours, offices are smoke-free and group meals take place at dawn, creating a different atmosphere than the rest of the year. Naturally, much less work is done, as people come in tired and late.

At home, this month is a time of family get-togethers, among both nuclear and extended families. Special foods are cooked during Ramadan: My favorite is *kataif*, a dessert pancake stuffed with nuts or cheese and dipped in a sweet syrup.

This year, Ramadan took on a political dimension when US President Bill Clinton used the imminent beginning of this holy month to explain why the attack on Iraq had to take place when it did. The common thinking in the Arab world was that the attacks would end once Ramadan started. The bombings, though, didn't stop on Saturday, December 19, when it was announced that this was the first day of the holy month. Some thought that God tried to help the Iraqi people by having the lunar crescent appear when it did. Others thought that the announcement of the beginning of the month was made by government-appointed Moslem clerics to speed up the end of the attacks.

I HEARD Clinton's speech in Amman, when the situation of the Iraqis under the American and British bombardment was at its worst. I remember the jeering and the anger expressed by many in our sitting room at the cynicism of Clinton's speech.

I wasn't very surprised the next day when I saw in various newspapers a photo of US Marines scribbling on the rockets aimed for Baghdad the statement "this is our Ramadan present to Iraq."

The hypocrisy of the Americans was matched by that of Israeli officials who made their annual statements of congratulation to Moslems for the holy month. The insincerity of these statements is demonstrated by the continued closure of Jerusalem to devout Moslems who feel a special blessing by praying in Al Aqsa mosque on Fridays during Ramadan.

Najaf Hillo of Gaza wanted to come to pray in Jerusalem last Friday.

With the "safe passage" road still unopened, Palestinians from Gaza still need a special permit to leave the district. She and her husband, who is over 50 years old (one of the Israeli criteria for permits), applied for permission to

Dry Bones



come and pray in Jerusalem. Exit permits can usually be obtained for same-day travel to Jerusalem and back.

But their application was rejected, even though neither she nor her husband have ever had any security problems. The last time she prayed in Jerusalem was back in 1988.

The extreme insincerity of the Israeli greetings was clearly exposed when an Israeli bomb landed on the dinner table of the Osman family (their names were not mentioned in the Israeli media) in the Lebanese village of Jenta.

The mother Nadwa, her infant Subhi, five-year-old Ali, seven-year-old Amin, 10-year-old Aida,

12-year-old Suad, and 16-year-old Amina were immediately killed.

The expression of sorrow by Israeli military officials will do little to bring comfort to the 41-year-old father, Mohammed and his 14-year-old son, Ala, who survived.

One of the lessons of all-day fasting can be applied to the political arena.

Fasting is supposed to strengthen believers' faith and patience. For Palestinians, the long road to peace and independence looks more rocky today, with the expected freeze in the peace process because of the new Israeli elections.

Palestinians will need to have a lot of patience, as well as faith that the occupation will soon be over.

Give the green light

URI DAN, DENNIS EISENBERG

Straining at the bit, ready to swing into action, the IAF was poised during the Gulf War to respond to the barrage of Scud missiles being fired into the Tel Aviv area.

Day after day the officers waited for the government's green light. The wait turned out to be in vain - prime minister Yitzhak Shamir succumbed to American pressure not to retaliate.

Instead Israel simply covered with their gas masks in their sealed rooms, as Saddam Hussein threatened to burn the land under their feet.

This passive approach established a pattern of behavior which demeaned the reputation of Israel as being a state that was not to be trifled with.

The failure by Shamir to respond to Saddam's attack was an early manifestation of the rot that has infected the Israeli leadership's psyche. It spread to Yitzhak Rabin and other government ministers, whether affiliated with the Left or Right and persists to this very day.

It is strikingly evident in Israel's response to the way the Syrians use the Hizbullah terrorist movement in the Lebanon to threaten Israel's northern border.

During the past several years, the IDF has conducted a series of pointless in-and-out land operations which served no purpose whatsoever. Repeated air raids

have been staged that were said to be successful, but have produced no visible results. Hizbullah gunmen hiding in Lebanese villages mock the Israeli communications that speak of accurate hits on targets.

If these tactics have been so successful, how is it that Hizbullah is stronger today, and continues to be sustained by the Syrian and Iranian governments?

In earlier times, an effective method would have been devised to handle the Lebanese problem. The country has the men to do the job, and do it brilliantly, as they have done in the past - perhaps even more so today, since they have state-of-the-art technology at their command. But the will at the top has been dulled.

The latest and most pitiful case of this ineffectual leadership was demonstrated during last week's American-British operation against Iraq. Operation Desert Fox. True, it lasted only four days, but Israeli, British and US experts

have all said that operations of this type will likely need to be repeated.

What our leaders told us during the bombardment was restated again and again: "It does not affect us. It is none of our business. We are not involved."

Our army knows how to take care of our enemies, if our leaders would just give the go-ahead

state and for their burning of the US flags they had been waving during Clinton's visit to Gaza only days before?

Their only advice to the public was to make sure that their gas masks were updated. If Israel is indeed so "not involved," why have hundreds of millions of shekels been spent to do this?

Military and government leaders seem to have forgotten that as recently as six years ago, steps were being taken to handle the Saddam Hussein menace via the Tze'elim guided missile project, though the operation's dress rehearsal went tragically wrong. Foreign newspapers made much of an Israeli plan to assassinate Saddam.

To the West, Saddam Hussein is a threat to the sources of oil. But to Israel he is deadly enemy - as deadly as any the country has faced since its founding. Today Iraq has pilotless planes that can carry biological or chemical weapons. If that isn't a deadly threat to all Israel, then what is?

The country has the men with the courage and imagination to bring Saddam Hussein to his knees. All they need is the go-ahead signal from their superiors.

The superiors, of course, must first be woken from their stupor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HYDROGEN AND STUPIDITY

Sir.- The two most common elements in our universe, hydrogen and stupidity, proliferate profusely among members of our government.

A case in point is the recent criticism of posters calling for the use of condoms in AIDS prevention by no less a person than our austere Deputy Minister of Health, Shlomo Benizri - guardian of our health.

His derogatory and stupid remarks toward the Zulu demonstrated his ignorance, lack of culture and insensitivity and invoked the fury of Dr. Buthelezi and the

Israeli ambassador in South Africa, further tarnishing the image of Israel.

I would respectfully like to suggest to him and his colleagues that they repeat the following three times daily: "Oh Lord, help me to keep my big mouth shut until I know what I am talking about," and remember that what the law does not forbid, shame forbids.

Dr. M. U. MILUNSKY

Netanya.

THANKS FOR THANKSGIVING

Sir.- We wish to publicly thank the staff, administration, parents and students of the American International School in Kfar Shmaryahu, for their very kind and thoughtful invitation to share their Thanksgiving luncheon with all retired Americans residing in the Retirement Home of Abuzat Bayit in Ra'anana and the Golden Age Home in Kfar Shmaryahu.

Close to 20 of us accepted the

invitation and for many of us it was a visual and gastronomic treat, with all the traditional Thanksgiving treats.

To Dania, the social worker of Abuzat Bayit and to Viva who were liaisons with the A.I.S. for this event, our deep thanks.

ETHEL and ABRAHAM COHEN, ABUZAT BAYIT

Ra'anana.

WHERE'S THE SAVING?

Sir.- In "Oil prices hit 25 year low" (Dec. 3), Dr. Amit Mor is quoted as saying that "Gas prices have fallen by about 20% in the last year, which presumably means reduced cost for all consumers, large and small."

Neither my gas nor electricity bills were reduced last year! Prices were even raised in my last gas bill.

Dr. ELIAHU HOFFMAN

Tel Aviv.

THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO EZRA

Sir.- MK Gideon Ezra made the politically incorrect estimation this week that a woman cannot be elected prime minister under the Likud banner because some of the Likud's natural allies won't vote for a woman.

Had he said the same thing about a religious candidate or an Arab candidate or an American immigrant candidate or a bald candidate, nothing would have happened. He might have even been able to say the same about a Russian immigrant.

But to speak the truth as he sees it in the case of a woman candidate is considered outrageous - whether it is correct or not is irrelevant. And Shelley Yehimowitz says she will sit back and wait for Ezra to apologize.

If Gideon Ezra insulted anyone, it is the electorate, certainly not the women.

ISRAEL PICKHOLTZ

Elazar.

TENDER MERCIES

Sir.- In "Cut our losses" (December 7), Yossi Olmert recommends Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon without even mentioning what will happen to our south Lebanese allies.

Shall we leave them to the tender mercies of Hizbullah? I think such a suggestion is irresponsible and immoral.

Dr. JACOB ROSIN

Netanya.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On December 24, 1933, *The Palestine Post* reported on the severe congestion in Tel Aviv hospitals, due to the fast development of the city and its surroundings.

50 years ago: On December 24, 1948, *The Palestine Post* reported that Prime Minister David Ben-

Gurion had ordered Israeli forces to break the deadlock in the Negev and to clear the entire Israeli territory, up to the Egyptian border, hastening the conclusion of an armistice. Heavy fighting, tank and air battles raged around Nirim and near the border.

25 years ago: On December 24,

1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that the Israel, US, Soviet and Egyptian delegations to the Geneva Peace Conference had held series of informal consultations in an effort to keep the spirit of the Israel-Arab meetings in motion.

Alexander Zvielli

150 من الاموال

Weekender

Love inspires every note

Music, laughter and great craftsmanship keep James Moody going.

By BARRY DAVIS

James Moody is in love – not just with his wife, Linda, but with the whole wide world. The veteran sax and flute player is one of the jazz world's more charming characters, intent on making his audience not only enjoy musical satisfaction but with a good laugh for their money, too. And if, as the saying claims, love is what makes the world go round, then Moody is surely firmly anchored in the global driving force.

Moody is currently here, primarily to team up with long-time comrade and fellow saxophonist Arnie Lawrence at a concert they are giving Saturday night in Haifa. The visit will also provide Moody with an opportunity to spend some time at the Bahai Temple in Haifa. Like the late, great trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, Moody is a member of the Bahai faith and it is, perhaps, only fitting

that Saturday night's gig will be entirely devoted to Gillespie's works. Moody's connection with Gillespie dates back half a century to the early days of the bebop revolution. Along with the likes of pianist Thelonious Monk and alto sax man Charlie Parker, Gillespie was one of the founding fathers of the new school of jazz, and Moody was a frequent side man in the trumpeter's bands. Today, at 73, Moody has lost none of the fire that made him such a sought-after member of the best jazz combos for over five decades. "I always thought – even when I hardly knew how to play a sax – that if I could play well, I would make people happy," he said in an interview at his Jerusalem hotel. Moody admits to having had a good start in life, in terms of his jazz education. "I became a jazz musician because my mother had jazz records – [swing big-band leaders] Chick Webb and Jimmy Lunceford – and she would play them all the time," Moody's total and undiluted love for jazz, to the exclusion of almost any other kind of music, is evident when he says he is indebted to his mother for allowing him to hear jazz at such an early age. "If I had had a mother who liked that rock 'n' roll crap, I probably would have been in trouble," he declares emphatically. Even the blues, despite their definitive role in the evolution of the earliest forms of jazz at the turn of the century, generally leave Moody unmoved. "I like the blues, but I can hear it once or twice, and that's enough for me," he says, as he reels off a truncated standard blues-number opener, "I woke this morning... bang!" in his time-worn gravelly voice.

But, paradoxically, the purist Moody does not differentiate between jazz and other musical genres. He denies having been weaned on "a wholesome diet of pure jazz." "I was brought up on music," he states definitively, going on to explain that music is: "melody, harmony and rhythm, plus a semblance of musical knowledge – I was brought up on that."

THIS is Moody's third visit to Israel, though it's the first time he has made it to Jerusalem.

Those who saw him at the first Red Sea Jazz Festival in 1987 were able to enjoy Moody's bop-based sax and flute playing, but were also entertained by the man's rich, if jocular, vocals.

But Moody denies being blessed with any significant vocal talent. "I'm a sax player," he says. "I try to sing, but I'm not what you would call a vocalist."

On the theme of vocalists – back to the definition of "music according to Moody" – there are a few singers whom the sax man would comfortably place in the category of musicians. To be a true musician, it seems, one has to be able to play an instrument, and to understand the trade well enough to be able to develop one's craft and to grow with it.

"Ella [Fitzgerald] was a good 'scater' [she could sing in "scat" style] and she had good ears, but I'm not sure she could play a piano. I know that Sarah Vaughan and Carmen McRae could play piano."

Moody is not to be swayed from his strict semantic approach, particularly when purveying his own profession.

"Every note you play counts. Everything," he states.



James Moody blowin' that horn and (below) in Jerusalem this week.

Moody believes that, once the notes leave his sax or his flute, they become the listener's property, and he or she will interpret the sounds in their own individual way.

"A while ago I made a record, and the record producer said 'I think we ought to yeast that up. I can hear some birds going on there. So I said he could go right ahead and put the crap on.'"

"But," Moody is at pains to add, "once you do that, you're limiting other people – preventing them from hearing what they want to hear."

This is why Moody did very little recording in the Seventies and early Eighties. He is unreservedly scathing in his criticism of the music industry, and those who run the show in the US.

"Blessed are those that run round in circles, for they shall be called 'big wheels,'" Moody jocularly intones.

"The music in America is a lie," he continues. "And the reason it's a lie is because they don't have people making the music producing the music. I hate that with a passion."

Contemporary forms of "music" are similarly dispensed with. He vilifies DJs who ply their trade by scratching records to produce repetitious beat and phrases. "When we had records," recalls Moody, "what we wanted was a new needle, not to scratch them."

BESIDES being one of the greatest jazz men around, Moody is an example of what can be achieved by concentrating on one's strengths rather than dwelling on one's shortcomings. It is hard to



Moody refuses to relate to his less-than-perfect hearing as an obstacle and relates a conversation he once had with Gillespie.

On hearing Moody bemoan the fact that he hadn't managed to gain as much formal education as he would have liked at an early age, Gillespie replied: "You should never be concerned about what you should have been. You're still capable of whatever you've got on your mind."

Moody says that when he plays a jazz concert he doesn't play to, or for, the audience. "I'm playing for myself because I'm trying to get better and, in doing that, I'm giving you honesty," and as he speaks he graphically demonstrates his point by working his robust and seasoned fingers up and down the scales of an imaginary saxophone.

"And I have still done all right, despite sticking to my guns," he says, with a smile.

James Moody, Beit Hagefen, Festival of Festivals, Haifa, Saturday, 8 p.m.



Singer Ehud Banai is in Beer Sheva tonight. (Daniel Hakim)

ional theme, the partying continues at Yellow Submarine, which hosts "Noches Flamenco." This show and party promises flamenco galore. 13 Harechavim St., in Talpiot. The fiesta starts at 9 p.m., call (02) 678-1387.

And Points Beyond

Start the weekend with a fun-for-the-family musical, *Busan Sfaradi*, which appears in Givat Brenner tonight, starting at 8:30

p.m. Friday night is now the time for stories, as the "Storyteller," a.k.a. our very own Aviv Gefen, performs at the Rishon LeZion Mofet, starting at 10 p.m. Tel. (03) 966-6141.

On Saturday night, the slightly older generation of musicians takes over, at least in the South, where Ehud Banai will be playing at the Beersheba Forum. Showtime at 9:30 p.m. Tel. (07) 627-8222.

Suave and sushi, a perfect blend

By SONIE LEMOR

Kashmir, owned by 29-year-old Mati Rachaminov and 33-year-old Avi Levi, is just what the upper-class Tel Aviv crowd was waiting for. Based on the Buddha Bar in Paris but with a touch of the Far East, Kashmir offers understated style to all who can afford it. Housed in a light yellow building that oozes elegance, Kashmir's entrance is lit by two eerily glowing red lights. Standing behind red velvet ropes is the selection/bouncer who quickly and politely turns away anyone without reservations – required even if you just want to sit down for a beer.

In the entrance, there are several high bar-type tables where Armani suits and smilers of Hennessy XO cognac combine with ripples of cultured laughter. The prevalent ambience is reminiscent of a private club somewhere in Europe.

The huge bar is manned by several professional bartenders and is stocked with every sort of alcohol – even the most spoiled connoisseur would be satisfied.

Situated in the center of the extravagant bar is the sushi bar through which you can see the refrigerated fresh raw fish. At the far end of the restaurant is an intimate table seating area. There are about 20 tables, all with handmade decorative light fixtures that match the abstract chandelier hanging in the bar area.

After midnight Kashmir boasts a small night menu that is worthwhile trying.

However, Kashmir's fancy night crowd comes less to eat, and more to see and be seen. With Japanese food now become so stylish, one may chance upon many hip Tel Aviv party-goers sipping the misleadingly sweet and oh-so-potent plum wine while devouring bites of attractively presented sushi.

Even though Kashmir boasts a very extensive sushi menu, its main feature is fusion. The kitchen is run by the catering service Food Art, and several handpicked chefs are under strict orders as to how each portion must be served. One may be slightly intimidated by combinations such as file mignon steaks in cocopant and peanut butter sauce, or shrimp in a wonton batter with a pungent sweet-and-sour sauce (known as Buddha shrimp, they are on the night menu and quite popular, NIS 50).

The main idea of fusion, according to the management, is that there are several different taste centers in the mouth – each to be satisfied simultaneously. Fusion also seasonally combines tastes from the Far East with the tastes of Europe.

The servers of this young enterprise are professional almost to a fault and very knowledgeable.

Kashmir, open from 7 p.m. until at least 2 a.m., is a place not to be missed – but don't forget to reserve a spot ahead of time!

Kashmir, 19 Rothschild Boulevard, Tel Aviv

Athletes on my mind

National team goalkeeper Nir Davidovitch talks about his favorite athletes

By the age of eight, Nir Davidovitch already knew what his calling in life was. To play soccer. Now, a mere 14 years later, his goal (no pun intended) has been achieved: a few weeks ago he was named first goalkeeper for the national Israeli soccer team.

"I am very glad to have this opportunity, I had always hoped for this," says Davidovitch.

Davidovitch and Maccabi Haifa are well on their way to a possible victory in the European finals.

These days it's all soccer, but as a child he also was involved with judo, basketball and tennis.

"Who knows what would have happened if I had gone in a different direction, maybe I would've been a world champion tennis player or something," says Davidovitch with a smile on his face.

For a 22-year-old, he has already accomplished quite a bit in the world of sports.

"Most of my interests, I guess, have to do with sports. I mean, I like movies and stuff, but I have practice every day and games every week and I have to travel a lot, so I don't really have time to read all that much. I would like to, but I don't really get a chance to," says Davidovitch.

His father, once a goalkeeper for Maccabi Haifa, is very supportive. "He comes to almost all of my games. My mother didn't understand at the beginning why I wanted to play soccer, but slowly she began to understand the game and now she and her friends always watch my games and talk in soccer lingo. She met my Dad after he left soccer and was already working for the police."

Davidovitch played the game by the book. "I started with the children's league and then, during the army, I began playing for the adult league and then went on to play in the national league as well."

"I don't think that it is all talent. I believe that a lot of psychology is involved as well. In every game, you've got to say to yourself, 'I'm the best, I am a great player' and sort of psych yourself up – otherwise it can be a tremendous amount of pressure to play," explains Davidovitch.

Being a soccer star also makes him the center of attention for a certain type of female fan.

Recently at a game, a very energetic fan held up a huge sign that read "Nir Davidovitch, will you marry me?"

"This was sort of funny. I mean, I was very flattered, but I have a



girlfriend. She [thefan] got a lot of attention because of it and was on television and all, so I guess that she got something out of it," says Davidovitch.

In a world that revolves around sports, Davidovitch has many athletes that have given him inspiration.

1. **Avi Ron, Israel**
"He was a goalkeeper for Maccabi Haifa and for the national team 11 years ago. He took Israel to the championship. He is an ideal role model for me."

2. **Diego Maradona, Argentina**
"First of all, he did a lot more than smoke drugs and drink. He played midfield, and did some amazing things. Before I was a goalkeeper, I wanted to be like him."

3. **Eyal Berkovic, Israel**
"He plays now for West Ham, but he was from Maccabi Haifa originally. I was honored to get a chance to play with him for a year before he left. He is a very talented football player who always gave 100%. You just have to admire a player like that."

4. **Michael Jordan, USA**
"The only thing that I can say about him is that he is the only one that can make me wake up at 4 in the morning for him. Since he left, I'm not all that interested in the Bulls."

5. **Haim Revivo, Israel**
"He is also from Maccabi Haifa, and two years ago he moved to play for Spain's Celta Vigo as a midfielder. His talent is amazing; it was an experience to train with him. He also gave his all in every practice session. It was a very special experience for me to train with him and Berkovic."

— Sonie Lemor

Hot tip

By DANIELA SCHEIDLIN

Tel Aviv

Israeli theater, with its often avant-garde tone and decidedly Israeli-based themes, is an intriguing institution undergoing rapid development. Both classical and new-fangled examples from within its short history can be sampled extensively this weekend, thanks in large part to the annual Original Play Festival at the Simta Theater in Old Jaffa. The newest productions run straight through this evening (the tail end of the three-day festival), with *Apple Pie*, at 8:30 p.m., *Without a Friend*, at 11 p.m., and *Ecile of the Soul*, at 12:30 a.m. Tel. (03) 681-2126. Yonatan Gefen has given audiences a rare piece to mull over, combining a touch of absurdity with Israeli obsession with Israeli subjects: *Petra* is a striking revisiting of national mythology. The play can be seen on Saturday

night, at ZOA House. Tel. (03) 527-9888.

A new production of an old Hanoch Levin play is the pride of Beit Lessin tonight. *Labor of Life*, is an exemplary display of Levin's jaded attitude towards, well, most things. Superior actors Yossi Banai and Tikki Dayan are a treat. Tonight at Beit Lessin, 8:30.

To top it off, a couple of important productions: one is the Cameri production of Hanoch Levin's ever-popular, though decidedly dour *The Whore From Ohio*, at ZOA House in Tel Aviv starting at 8:30; the other is the Haifa Theater production of *To Be Or Not To Be*, which will be at the Cameri, also at 8:30 p.m. Tel. (03) 527-9888.

Not in the mood for theater? Warm up with the *Blues and Heineken* series tonight, which brings us Katie Webster (also known as the Swamp Boogie Queen) and Vas-tie Jackson from Mississippi. Enav Center is the hot-spot where these crooners will perform with Shababiah Bar-Yisrael as their band. Starts at 9:30 p.m. Tel. (03) 527-7763.

And if a wake-up call is what's needed, *Myumana* will beat your eardrums – and everything else – with its wondrous rhythm and movement show. The ensemble performs at Tzavta tonight (two shows, at 7 and 9 p.m.) and tomorrow at 9 p.m. Call (03) 527-9797.

The literary life of Tel Aviv lives on, and Beit Ariela is the place to be tonight. Avi Oz lectures on Shakespeare in the auditorium, starting at 7:30 p.m., while behind

door No. 302, the articulate and poignant Roni Somek talks about poetry, starting at 8 p.m. Tel. (03) 691-0146.

Saturday night yields an unusual ethnic-music offering: Violetta Salama sings the songs of Om Kolthom, at 8:30 p.m. at the Inbal Ethnic Center. Call (03) 517-3711.

And lest any discipline remain untouched, a major dance premiere will be held tonight and over the weekend. The sometimes-clad (and usually scantily at that) dancer and choreographer Ido Tadmor presents his first work following a year-long hiatus. *Neta* plays at Suzanne Dellal, 9 tonight, 10 p.m. tomorrow and again at 9 p.m. Tel. (03) 510-5656.

Jerusalem

If you missed him last week, here's a chance to mend your ways: Hugh Blumenfeld, American folk rocker, is still touring and offers a performance tonight at the Art Bar, 5 Old Quarry Road in Mevaseret Zion. Starts at 8:30 p.m. Tel. (02) 533-7230.

Music is just getting started in the holy city tonight; the Israel Museum continues with its international jazz series, "The Voice and the Instrument," in which it hosts Mark Murphy, Randy Brecker, vocalist and trumpet respectively, as well as Israeli musicians. Starts at 8:30 p.m. at the Springer Auditorium. Call (02) 670-8281. Going all the way on the interna-

Weekender

Food & Drink

At a loss for French, call it smothered chicken



By RUSS PARSONS

The French have a mad zeal for codification. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the seemingly simple task of cooking chicken.

They have the *sauz*, wherein the bird is browned in butter, then removed to a plate while the sauce is prepared separately, before the whole thing is brought together — briefly, never at a boil — before serving. And they have chicken *tuve*, always cooked with plenty of liquid and no browning.

In between, there's the *cocotte*, which is like a *sauz*, except that the chicken is cooked in a covered pot (a *cocotte*). The all-but-forgotten *poêlé* is a lot like a *cocotte*, except that the chicken is cooked on a bed of vegetables.

Then they've got the *fricassée* family, made by cooking browned chicken (how brown it is and the type of stock and wine determine whether it is a light or a dark *fricassée*) in liquid until very tender, then binding that liquid with a combination of egg yolks and cream. The *blanchette*, a first cousin, is the same thing except that the chicken is brought slowly

to a simmer in cold stock, giving a more delicate flavor.

Thanks to the French, we have a thousand names for chicken, but I have absolutely no idea what to call the bird I made the other night. If forced to follow French terminology, I suppose I'd call it a modern kind of dark *fricassée* — one that favors direct flavor rather than richness.

But I prefer to think of it as that prototypically American dish, the smother. I think it's time for the smother to come back into its own. If I were French and forced to codify the preparation of a smother, it would go something like this: Meat is lightly coated with flour and then browned. Seasoning vegetables are added and lightly cooked. A moderate amount of liquid is added and everything is cooked, loosely covered, until the meat is quite tender. If desired, other garnishing vegetables can be added when the cooking is almost complete.

What you wind up with is tender meat in a lightly thickened, deeply flavored sauce. Considering the flexibility in seasoning vegetables and cooking medium (stock, wine, water),

there are hundreds of possible variations.

The fixed rules for success are these:

- Make sure the pieces are thoroughly but lightly floured. The flour browns nicely, giving a good deep flavor, but too much will turn to a gluey mess when the liquid is added. Bang the floured pieces together, pat them with your hands, knock them against the side of the bowl, do whatever it takes to make sure that only the thinnest coating adheres.
- Brown the pieces slowly. That is what makes for a deeply flavored sauce. It might seem that it's taking too long, but at 10 minutes per side, you'll wind up with perfectly golden chicken, ready to braise.

Note: That's golden, not dark brown. You don't want to overcook the chicken or it will be tough. When you're browning it, make sure it doesn't cook too quickly either. If you rush it, the chicken will get tough rather than tender.

Pay attention to how you stack the chicken. Dark meat always goes in the bottom, to cook in the liquid. White meat always goes on

top, out of the liquid but in the steam so it won't dry out.

Poultry purists will go so far as to say that chicken white meat should never be cooked in a *fricassée*, stew or, presumably, smother, only the dark. But I've got two white-meat lovers in my house, so I'm obligated. If you're not so encumbered, feel free to use just dark meat.

- Cover the pot during the braising, but leave the lid slightly askew. This encourages a slow evaporation, thickening and strengthening the sauce, and it bleeds off steam, keeping the white meat from overcooking (or, more accurately, lessening the amount it overcooks).
- Don't be tempted to add more liquid than is called for. Depending on how wide your pan is, you may not even be able to see the two cups of wine once they're added. Don't worry about it. It's there. With this amount of liquid, you'll wind up with a perfect sauce — just barely thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.

Because, of course, you don't want to take that smothering thing too literally.



By PHYLLIS GLAZER

Phyllis' Tips

The first thing to remember is that the longer fruits and vegetables are stored, the more they decline in nutritional value. It is better, when possible, to buy small quantities frequently than to shop once a week for the week's produce.

It is also important to check that your refrigerator is working properly and that cold air is not leaking out. One way to check if air is escaping is to see if you can run a piece of paper between the rubber seal and the door. If you can, the seal is not tight enough. Another way to check is by buying a thermometer and checking if the refrigerator is around 4°C in temperature. (The optimum temperature for fruit and vegetable storage is 2-4°C.)

The best-tasting tomatoes are those which haven't been refrigerated, but rather placed on a shelf in the kitchen out of direct sunlight. The best thing to do is buy them in varying stages of ripeness.

Lettuce, provided it is very fresh, can be stored about 2-3 days in the refrigerator. I like to wash the leaves well, let them dry, wrap them in a cloth kitchen towel and put the towel in a plastic bag. That way they are ready to munch at any time and, provided the refrigerator is cold enough, should also last about 2-3 days.

Melons, and particularly cabbage, can be stored for longer periods of time provided you buy the melons slightly under-ripe. (You can leave the ripe one

at room temperature and put the others in the refrigerator or take them out to ripen as needed.) Ripe melons "give" slightly at the stem end and have a sweet scent. Cabbage should be stored wrapped in plastic wrap and placed in a storage container once it's cut so it doesn't dry out. (If you see it is beginning to dry out, use it in a stir-fry, steam it and add a little oil for flavor, or add it to soup.)

The best way to store onions and potatoes is at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Potatoes can still be used when they just begin to sprout, providing you remove the "eyes," which are unhealthy to consume. When it comes to fresh milk, I'd say that it's best to use it within three days. You can buy milk these days in smaller cartons.

Eggs should be stamped with the last recommended day for use. Hard-boiled eggs should be eaten within two days. Although it might last longer, I also would use refrigerated cooked rice or pasta within two days.

The best thing you can do when cooking for yourself is to cook up batches of pasta, rice, other grains and various kinds of beans (chickpeas, lentils) and store them in sandwich bags or little containers in the freezer. That way they are always accessible; you can eat chickpeas for a nutritious protein snack, add beans to a vegetable soup or salad, or even mix grains and legumes as a cold salad or warm main dish served along with a salad.



By PHYLLIS GLAZER

Some time ago you wrote about cumin seeds and I went out and bought some, but I lost the article and don't know what to do with them. Should I crush them or leave them whole? What foods are they good with?

— Nira Shetman, Karmel

is also good with chicken and fish, ground beef, in breads (as it is used in Germany) and with cheese (as it is used in the Netherlands). You even can sprinkle cumin seeds on sliced cucumbers, pasta, potatoes or rice.

If you own a mortar and pestle or a coffee grinder, it is best to buy the spice whole and crush it just before using, since the volatile oils evaporate quickly. I use the powdered spice in soups and cholent. The whole spice, lightly toasted in a dry frying pan to bring out its flavor, is best in rice, meat and chicken dishes and in breads.

A READER WRITES:

Re: The request for a fruit soup recipe. (Feedback, November 19): I have a simple recipe for fruit soup that's "no-fail." All you need is any variation of summer fruit like plums, nectarines, peaches, seedless grapes and/or peeled apples. Wash fruit and cut it in pieces and put in a pot more than half

full of cold water. Bring to a boil and add two slices of lemon. Cook for 25-30 minutes. Add a package of Jell-O and a few shakes of cinnamon. Mix well and turn off the gas. Let it cool and put into zip-lock bags. It freezes well for many weeks.

— Paula Brand, Jerusalem

I like your recipe except for the use of Jell-O, unless you mean plain gelatin. Flavored gelling powders are full of artificial ingredients, including colorings and flavorings. It is better to use plain gelatin and add juice concentrate or apple or grape juice.

Phyllis Glazer can be contacted c/o The Jerusalem Post Magazine, P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000, or by e-mail: phyllisglazer@jpost.co.il. Do not send stamped, self-addressed envelopes, as inquiries cannot be answered individually. Feedback also appears in The Jerusalem Post Magazine on Friday.

SMOTHERED CHICKEN WITH FENNEL AND GREEN OLIVES

2 chickens, 1.5-2 kg. each
 1/2 cup flour
 salt
 2-4 Tbsp. parve margarine or butter
 225 gr. onions, thinly sliced
 450 gr. fennel bulb
 2 cups dry white wine
 1 kg. boiling potatoes, cubed
 1 cup green olives, unpitted
 225 gr. mushrooms, quartered
 1/2 cup chopped fennel fronds

Cut up each chicken into 10 serving pieces (2 wings, 2 drumsticks, 2 thighs and each breast half cut in half).

Combine flour and 2 tsp. salt in large mixing bowl. Toss each

chicken piece in seasoned flour, knock against side of bowl to get rid of excess flour and set aside on plate.

Heat 2 Tbsp. margarine in a large, heavy casserole and begin frying chicken, using only enough pieces to fill bottom of pan without crowding. Cook chicken until lightly browned on both sides (about 10 minutes per side). Remove chicken to cooling rack over baking sheet. Repeat until all chicken is browned, adding more margarine as needed.

When all chicken is browned, drain all but 1 Tbsp. fat from the pan. Add onions and cook, stirring and scraping bottom of pan to release brown sticky residue.

Cut fennel in quarters, remove cores, then cut into 5cm. sections. Add to onions and cook until fennel

begins to soften, about 5 minutes.

Add chicken, putting legs and thighs on bottom, then wings and finally breast pieces. Add wine.

Put lid on pot slightly askew and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, 30 minutes. If chicken begins to stick, reduce heat.

While chicken is cooking, cook potatoes in large pan of boiling, lightly salted water until tender, about 15 minutes.

When chicken is tender enough to pierce easily with a knife, add green olives and mushrooms to chicken and cook 10 minutes more. Add potatoes and heat through, about 5 minutes.

Before serving, garnish with fennel fronds and stir well. (Serves 8-10.)

(Los Angeles Times)

Delicious duck

Duck's had little luck over the past decade, as consumption — not exactly huge to begin with — took a nose dive. Always an also-ran on the poultry scene, duck became a fine-feathered victim of fat phobia.

With the fat-free craze in the late '80s and early '90s, consumers were saying, "Oh, duck's fatty, it's greasy."

So duck farmers did what other producer groups have done when threatened by fear

of fat: They picked meatier, leaner animals, put them on a diet — and let the world know that it was a much different product than before.

Lean seems an odd word to choose to describe duck, since this bird's natural inclination is to be fatty. Duck tends to drip a very large amount of fat during roasting — so much so that one food writer wrote of having to "bail it out."

But not everyone is seeking a sleeker bird.

Ducks and geese evolved with fatty skin because they are migratory, flying nonstop twice a year and storing calories in their skin and liver for the trips.

The reality of duck is that the fat is what makes it delicious.

"Why would man want to change something like that?" a meat distributor asked. "If you don't want to eat fat, don't eat duck."

(The Washington Post)



for the duck:
 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
 scant 1/4 tsp. ground cloves
 scant 1/4 tsp. ground allspice
 scant 1/4 tsp. black pepper
 scant 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
 scant 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
 4 boneless duck breast halves

for the vinaigrette:
 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 1 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary
 salt and pepper to taste

Combine the salt with the cloves, allspice, pepper, cinnamon and cayenne and sprinkle the mixture over both sides of the breasts, rubbing it into the flesh and skin. Place in a container and refrigerate overnight.

Heat a nonstick pan until hot. Add the seasoned breasts skin-sides down and cook over medium heat for 4-5 minutes. Turn the breasts over and cook for another 4-5 minutes, or until medium rare.

While the breasts are cooking, combine the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, rosemary and salt and pepper to taste in a saucepan and heat gently until just warm. Slice the duck breasts thin, drizzle with vinaigrette and serve. (Serves 4.)

(The Washington Post)

ROASTED DUCK BREAST WITH HOISIN BARBECUE SAUCE AND WHITE BEAN SUCCOTASH

From John Wabick, chef at New Heights restaurant in Washington

for the hoisin barbecue sauce:
 1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh ginger
 root

1 scallion, chopped (white and pale-green parts)
 1 1/2 tsp. dark (toasted) sesame oil
 pinch cayenne pepper
 1/2 cup rice vinegar
 1 cup hoisin sauce

for the duck:
 6 boneless duck breast halves

for the succotash:

300 gr. shiitake mushrooms, julienned
 1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh ginger
 root

1 Tbsp. dark (toasted) sesame oil
 1/2 cup white wine
 1 cup cream or parve substitute
 2 cups cooked small white beans
 3 scallions, thinly sliced (white and pale-green parts)
 2 Tbsp. chopped coriander
 salt and pepper to taste

Over medium heat, saute the garlic, ginger and scallions in the sesame oil until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the cayenne, cook for 30 seconds, then add the vinegar and hoisin sauce. Cook for 5 minutes. Strain and refrigerate until ready to use.

Preheat the oven to 205°. Heat a very large ovenproof saute pan over medium-high heat. Add the duck breasts skin-sides down and cook until the skin is crisp and golden, about 8 minutes. Turn the breasts over, brush the skin with the hoisin barbecue sauce and place in the oven. Roast until cooked through, about 6-7 minutes for medium-rare. Remove from the oven and brush again with the sauce. Let rest for 10 minutes.

In a large saute pan over medium heat, saute the mushrooms, garlic and ginger in the sesame oil until tender, about 8 minutes. Add the wine and cook until it has reduced by half. Add the cream and cook until it has reduced by half. Add the beans and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in

the scallions, coriander and salt and pepper to taste.

Slice each duck breast, drizzle some of the sauce over it and serve with the succotash. (Serves 6.)

APRICOT-BRANDIED DUCK BREASTS

Here's a recipe from the American Duckling Council's brochure, Ideas and Inspiration: New Thinking on Duckling.

4 boneless, skinless duck breast halves
 nonstick spray oil
 freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 1/2 cups apricot nectar
 1/2 cup brown sugar
 2 Tbsp. brandy
 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
 2 Tbsp. water

1 1/2 cups peeled, 1/2cm. slices sweet potatoes

Spray both sides of the duck breasts with the nonstick spray oil; season with pepper to taste. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat; add the duck and cook for 2 minutes per side or until lightly browned. Remove the duck breasts and set aside.

Add the apricot nectar, brown sugar, brandy and cinnamon to the hot pan. Bring to a gentle boil.

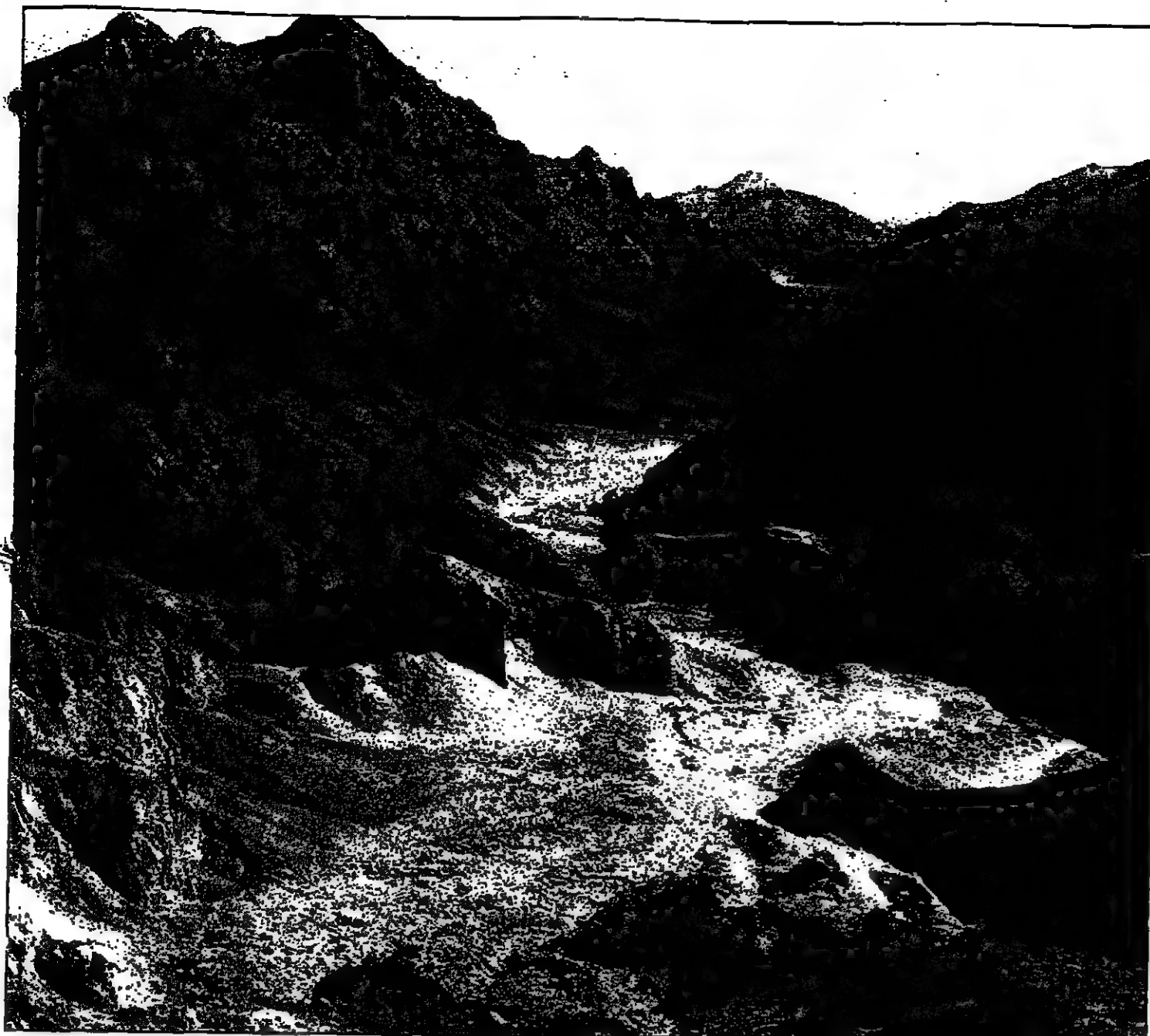
Mix the cornstarch with the water. Add the mixture to the pan and stir. Cook until it thickens. Add the sweet-potato slices, reduce heat to low and cook until the potatoes just begin to soften, about 10 minutes. Add the duck breasts and cook for another 10 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. (Serves 4.)

OBELISK'S SEASONED DUCK BREAST WITH WARM BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

This is an adaptation of a dish served by Peter Pastan, chef-owner of Obelisk in Washington. Pastan always uses muscovy duck breasts, which he finds leaner, meatier and more full-flavored than moulard. But since muscovy breasts are hard to find, the more commonly available moulard may be substituted.

A cross between a male Muscovy duck and a female White Pekin, moulards are often raised for foie gras, those silken fattened livers. Moulard's legs are traditionally used to make confit, which is duck or goose meat cooked and preserved in herb fat.

Pastan sometimes serves this dish with sautéed artichokes and potatoes.



(Above and right) Just minutes from the touristy resort town of Eilat, incredible views, mesmerizing geological formations and overpowering silence await you.

Rocky mountain high



(Above and right) Although there are a number of hikes in the Eilat nature reserve suitable for children, remember that each child has different abilities and a different tolerance level for steep sections or rocky trails.

Close Encounters

By Allan Rabinowitz

Eilat offers diversions from sunbathing to gambling, camel riding to parasailing. But hiking too can be the climax of a vacation. The views are incredible, the geological formations mesmerizing and bizarre, the silence overpowering, and the sense of aloneness is just a short hike away from the shores of the Gulf of Eilat. Such moments in nature are refreshing, cleansing and all the more precious because of their rarity in this tiny, hemmed-in country. The bulk of the barren mountains and canyons west and northwest of Eilat comprise a nature reserve that judges the Egyptian border. Granite, gneiss, sandstone, limestone, flint and other rocks form a unique collage of color.

"Recent" rock formations, 30,000 years old, may abut rocks over three million years old. The region is webbed with hiking trails, some of which are long and strenuous, assailing peaks exceeding six or seven hundred meters in height. But it takes no survival expert to hike here. Families and casual hikers can experience the desert for up to three hours on the following four hikes that have been tested on children seven and 10-years old.

THE RED Canyon is one of the most heavily traveled trails in the

Eilat Mountains. It's about a 22-kilometer drive north-west from Eilat along the Ma'aleh Eilat road, Route 12, which parallels the Egyptian border. A marked gravel road leads off to the east and heads toward a parking lot. After following Nahal Shani for several hundred meters through a landscape of clays and conglomerates, you'll come to the Red Canyon itself, a 10-meter-deep undulating groove of red Nubian sandstone that drops in a series of steps. You can walk along the canyon bed for about 650 meters, noting the conspicuous sedimentary layers and pockmarked red formations. Then, suddenly, the path climbs up the southern bank of the channel along the sandstone wall.

and heads back to the parking lot along the rim of the shallow canyon. While beautiful, this route takes less than an hour and can quickly clog up with a busload or two of hikers. You might opt to continue along the stream bed another kilometer, and then head south for a longer, less-traveled loop (up to two hours) that passes a 30-meter dry waterfall on its way back to the parking lot.

TWO accessible, pretty loop hikes are found about eight kilometers north of Eilat off the Arava road. Turn west on the gravel road at the sign pointing to Amram's Pillars. At the fork in this dirt road, head left toward Nahal Shehoret. The parking lot lies about three kilometers ahead.

Nahal Shehoret, or the Black Canyon, is immediately distinguishable, carved from very dark metamorphic rock. This wide, stony, steep-walled, winding canyon feels very isolated. Indeed, an ancient camel caravan route bypassed the canyon because of its stony floor.

All alone there, we suddenly saw a wild ibex standing by a gap in the canyon wall and staring calmly at us. A kid then skipped across the dry stream bed to join its parent.

The canyon winds around to the north and west and eventually opens onto a low ridge and watershed. A red-marked trail hooks uphill to the right, to a saddle in a ridge that opens up to a view of nearby Mt. Amir and the hills fringing the Arava.

A black-marked trail will loop around north of the canyon and slope down to the dirt road and parking lot.

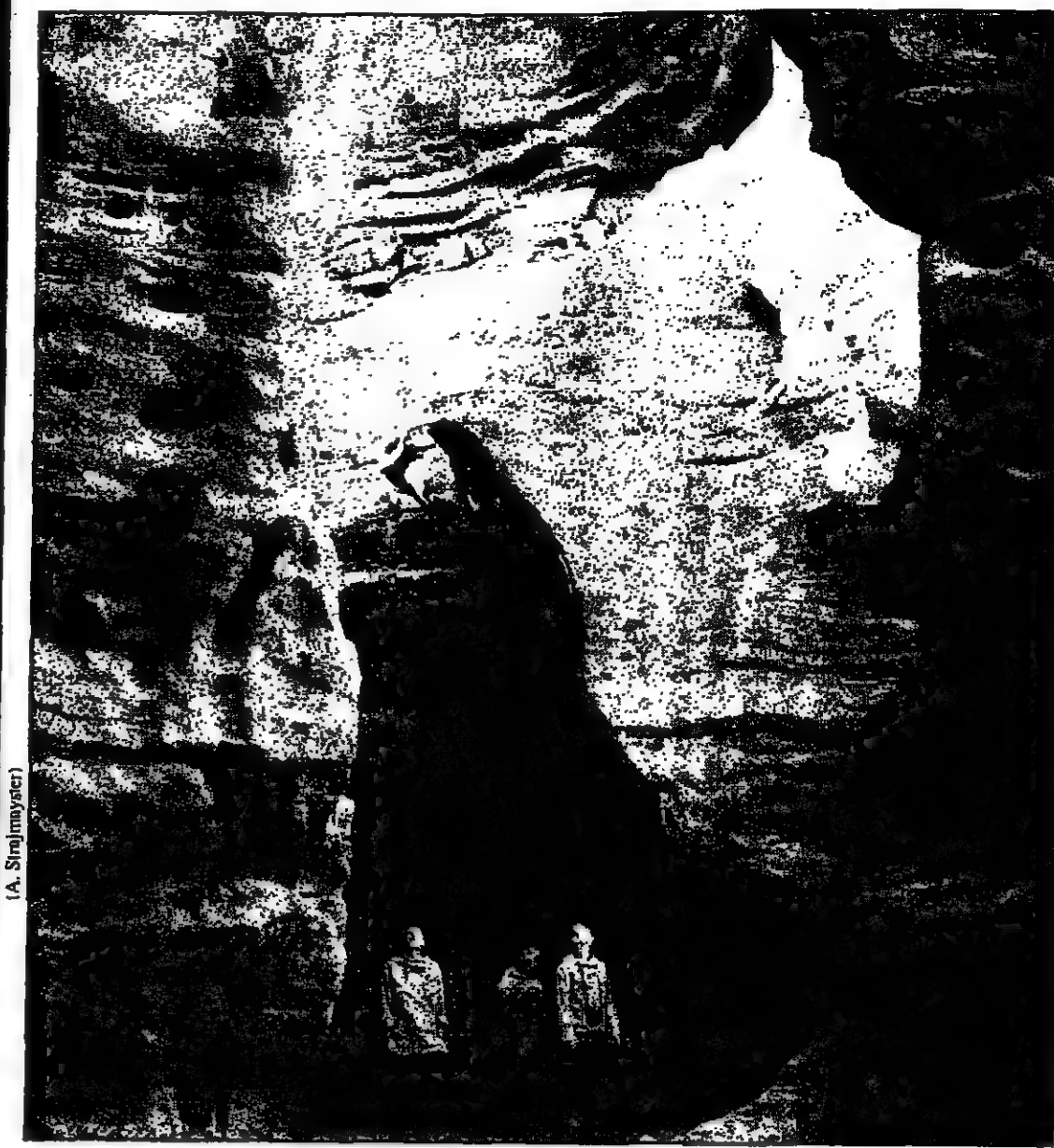
The right fork in the dirt road reaches Amram's Pillars. These 15-meter high layers of sandstone, buffed by wind and etched by water, stand like the hollowed columns of some immense ancient temple.

Most people are content with simply viewing and photographing these marvelous formations before returning to their cars. But nearby a loop trail begins, one that I cannot recommend enough. The variety of shapes and landscapes visible within this compact circle of terrain is impressive. With our two children, this hike took a relaxing, unpressured two-and-a-half hours.

To start this loop, head back from the parking lot about 50 meters along the dirt road and take the blue trail that heads towards Mitze Amram. After a few minutes of walking, you'll take the red trail that splits south off the blue trail. This trail has several short segments of steep uphill zigzagging to a height of over 300 meters. But the intricately carved sandstone bluffs and banks, and the view from the plateau at the top, make the climb worthwhile.

This trail continues to a shallow valley which marks the watershed between Nahal Shehoret and Nahal Amram, and then a green trail climbs still higher, to an overlook more than 400 meters high, reached through layers of white soft sandstone. The green trail then heads back down the sandstone cliffs, past holes and pits that were part of ancient copper mines.

Weekender Travel



and through passages sculpted and polished in white sandstone by wind and water. The trail then rejoins the dirt road leading to the Amram's Pillars parking lot.

YOU CAN also do a beautiful hike without even leaving Eilat. From behind the Eilat Field School, on the western shore of the Gulf of Eilat by the Eilat-Taba road, a green-marked trail ascends west to the peak of Mt. Tzefahot. The climb is steady and moderate, with a few segments of steeper switchbacks, including one which, like a trench, cuts right through the rock.

When you reach the top of Mt. Tzefahot, 278 meters high, a powerful wind blowing off the gulf, chilly in winter but hot as a furnace in late spring, might hit you.

From this point, you can clearly see the variegated hues of sharp-toothed mountains that fringe the bright blue Gulf of Eilat. The contrast is breathtaking. The boats in the gulf glide along like pale insects.

You can see, from this spot, four countries: Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the northwestern corner of Saudi Arabia. Wow!

That's when you feel how squeezed in we are here - and yet you can experience a rough, harsh, silent expansiveness as well.

Taking in this land bridge, arcing

around the gulf from Sinai, across the Arava and to the biblical mountains of Edom, it is easier to understand the struggles of the Children of Israel as they wandered through here. My son Ezra, however, was more entranced by the flecks of mica schist spread everywhere, sparkling like splinters from dozens of smashed bottles.

and then descends into a wide wadi which reaches the Club In. From there, a road leads back to the main road and the field school. This loop took about two-and-a-half hours. A trail to Mt. Tzefahot can also be reached via nearby Nahal Shlomo.

Keep in mind that although these hikes are suitable for children, each child has different abilities and a different tolerance level for steep sections or rocky trails.

For all these hikes, take up to two-three liters of water per person. In the summer, take extra water, (a liter per hour per person), but also exercise caution and careful deliberation about whether to hike at all. The summer heat in the Eilat Mountains is intense and the evaporation rate extremely fast. Do only short routes in the early morning hours.

Always bring a hat. You can purchase a 1:50,000 topographic map, with trail colors matching the trail markers, at the Eilat Field School (07-637-1127). The knowledgeable staff there can provide further details on regional trails, and offers guided hikes as well.

Allan Rabinowitz is a licensed tour guide. He can be reached at allan@jpost.co.il

The Big Book of Pasta

by Beth Elon



The pasta revolution is here - more brands and types available on the Israeli market than ever before, low on calories, high on nutrition, low on cost.

How to cook it? THE BIG BOOK OF PASTA with its luscious full color photographs gives you enough of a variety of recipes, spices, historical facts and serving suggestions to make memorable meals which will linger in your memory - from Olive Oil and Herbs to Tomato Sauces and Cheeses, from Pasta with Meat or Fish to Baked Pasta and Pasta Salads. ALL KOSHER. Includes index and list of Italian names. Hardcover, 276 pp.

...a book that comprehensively, accurately and with joy captured the love of Italian food. The recipes have a broad scope, are interesting and well written, and will prove of interest to anyone who values reading about or preparing food."

- Daniel Rogov, The Jerusalem Post Magazine

Books, The Jerusalem Post, POB 81, Jerusalem 91000

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Weekender Leisure

Photo magazines galore

On Camera

By DAVID BRAUNER

From time to time, friends and correspondents send "On Camera" copies of unusual or little-known photographic magazines. Many of these journals are devoted to special-interest audiences or the members of a particular society. The articles are often chock-full of fascinating information, sometimes mainstream, sometimes offbeat.

Historian, writer and editor George Gilbert recently sent me the latest *Photographica* quarterly, aimed at "all interested in... the development of photography." The issue features a thumbnail sketch

of Deputy US Marshal Wyatt Earp (1848-1929) by antique photo collector George Hart.

Hart's collection includes a tintype of Earp making "a great show of authority by dangling his handcuffs in an officious manner." The long exposure also captures four horseflies, looking like white specks, sitting on his knee, calf and two on his hat.

The picture was made shortly after October 26, 1881, the date of the shoot-out that became known as the Gunfight at OK Corral. According to Hart, Earp had no intention of handcuffing or arresting anyone, but rather was bent on "killing the men he blamed for

(Above) Steam train of the 1880s from the archives of the National Railway Museum, York, England, featured in "O3 exposed" magazine; (below) The Nikon, a classic Japanese SLR camera that conquered the market, from "The Photographic Journal" of the Royal Photographic Society (Repro: David Brauner)

disabling his brother Virgil, and later killing his brother Morgan."

Apart from Gilbert's own article on the Jewish photographer-adventurer Oskar "Omar" Marcus, a.k.a. "Marcus of Arabia," 1910-1980, and his triple-lens Rectiflex Rotor camera, *Photographica* also runs a boxed feature on

Daguerreotype cameras. According to collector Matthew Isenburgh, only about 500 apparatuses are known worldwide, with a possible 300 more still to "come out of the woodwork."

(*Photographica*, 1150 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, USA.)

O3 EXPOSED is a British magazine devoted to public exhibitions of photography that came our way via camera collector Ken Berg. Among the trivia gleaned from *O3*'s pages is the fact that London's Victoria and Albert Museum collection of photographs is "the oldest and biggest in world."

The V&A's founder and first director, Henry Cole, started amassing the museum's photo holdings in 1856, and in 1858 he mounted the world's first-ever museum exhibition of photography. Since then, the V&A has continued to collect widely, boasting extensive work by 20th-century photographers.

The National Railway Museum at York, England, houses a photographic archive of some one and half million railway pictures. The images date back to the mid-1800s and cover every aspect of railroad culture. (*O3 exposed*, Aspen Publishing, Christ Church, Cosway Street, London NW1 5NJ, England)

PIA Gidal, whose late, great husband Nahum Tim Gidal was a member of The Royal Photographic Society, passed on to us several back issues of the RPS's

The Photographic Journal, established in 1853. The journal brims with quality images, thoughtful articles and news, as well as book and new-product reviews.

Stephen Bulley's article *How 35 mm SLRs Conquered the Market* (March 1998) traces the steady march of progress of the Japanese-made camera that won the West.

Englishman Thomas Sutton first patented the principle of using a single (reflex) lens to both view and record the image in 1861. It took another 75 years for the engineering skills of

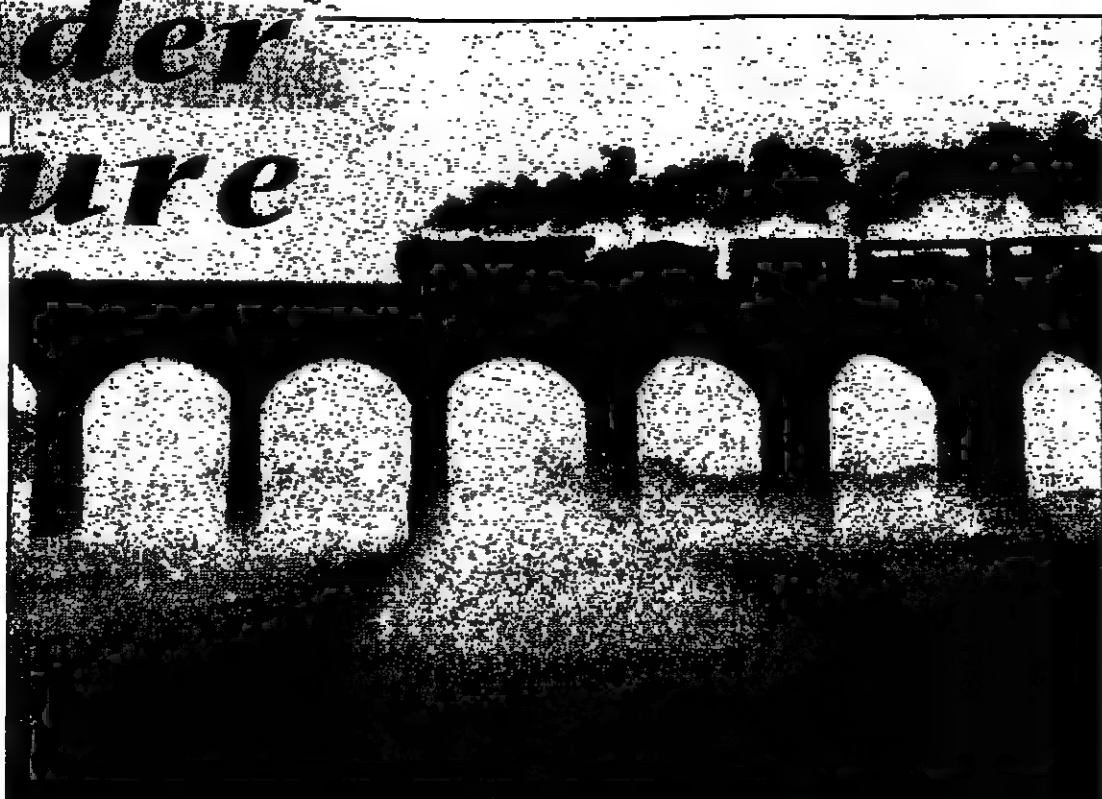
for the masses. The Japanese replaced defective items without question, built huge "product families" or systems of interchangeable bodies and lenses, and actively created a "market pull" for easily operated, inexpensive, good cameras.

Pentax gave discounts to photo schools, getting students hooked on their products. Nikon targeted American press photographers. The result was that Vietnam War journalists did the same for Nikon's reputation of camera ruggedness and reliability as their World War II counterparts did for Leica. Canon and Minolta inspired consumer confidence in their cameras by manufacturing other optical products like photocopiers and scanners.

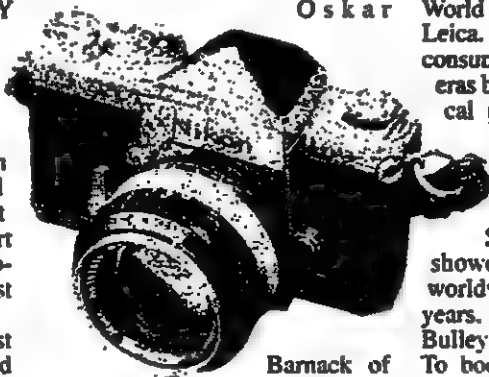
Despite the Japanese manufacturers' massive marketing efforts, 35 mm SLR camera products have shown a steady decline in worldwide sales over the last 20 years, possibly the result of what Bulley terms "market saturation."

To boost flagging sales, Canon, Fuji, Minolta, Nikon and the American giant Kodak jointly introduced the Advanced Photo System (APS) in 1996. Seen by Bulley as "a good interim product," APS is creating new interest in photography, while the R&D labs are busily perfecting digital photography for the masses. (*The Photographic Journal*, c/o Royal Photographic Society, The Octagon, Milson Street, Bath BA1 1DN, England; overseas non-members' subscriptions available)

Your photography questions and comments are welcome. Contact David Brauner, e-mail: dmorris@mail.biu.ac.il (writing "for David" in the subject line) or fax 02-563-7792 or c/o Photo Archives, The Jerusalem Post, P.O.B. 81, Jerusalem 91000.



Tintype of Deputy US Marshal Wyatt Earp (1881) dangling his handcuffs on the cover of 'Photographica'



Barnack of the German Leitz Optical Company, manufacturers of Leica cameras, to develop the first production model SLR, the Ihagee King Ektar.

Leitz made only 1,000 cameras to test the market. The camera was, in today's parlance, "a winner" because, as Bullock says, "the company understood the market better than the market understood itself." That was pre-World War II, when the main camera-buying market was a relatively small elite who sought top-quality, precision, hand-made instruments.

After the war, Japanese firms, particularly Nikon and Asahi Pentax, used the SLR design to appeal to the broader, lower end of the market, mainly in the US. Small teams of engineers designed exciting new models, which unskilled production workers built

Bridge Talmudic game

By MATTHEW GRANOVETTER

East dealer
Neither side vulnerable

North
♠ 10 9 8 6 4
♥ 10 2
♦ 9 8 3
♣ 8 7 5

West East
♠ A 3 2 ♠ 7
♥ 9 3 ♥ A K J 8 5 4
♦ K J 7 6 4 ♦ A 2
♣ J 10 3 ♣ Q 9 6 2

South
♠ K Q J 5
♥ Q 7 6
♦ Q 10 5
♣ A K 4

West North East South
double 2♠ 3♠ 1NT

Today's deal was submitted as a "talmudic bridge problem" by Jim Dieble of Chicago, who sat South. The bidding started with East, who opened one heart. South overcalled one notrump. West doubled and North escaped to spades. When East bid three clubs, South had a decision to make. Should he raise partner's spades, with his great support, or should he pass because the bidding indicated that most of the strength was with his opponents?

At the table, Dieble bid three spades, thinking in terms of the popular theory: The Law of Total Tricks. This theory states that, in general, your side is safe bidding to the level of the number of total trumps you have.

In this deal, South knew that his side held nine spades, so he thought it was safe to bid to three spades, where nine tricks are required. When West doubled three spades and the contract was down three, for minus 500, Dieble was sick over his bid. He decided to poll other players and see what they would have done.

Some agreed with Dieble's three-spade call while others stat-

ed that it was too dangerous to bid three spades.

The biggest proponent of the Law of Total Tricks, Larry Cohen, who wrote two books and teaches a course on this subject by e-mail, answered the problem this way: "Normally, I'd be delighted to bid three spades — we have nine trumps and my KQJ of spades are so pure!

"However, in this particular auction, I'd consider it quite dangerous. Partner could easily have something like 10-x-x-x-x of spades and three small in each red suit, giving them an easy number."

"At the same time, I have no guarantee that they can make a game — clearly they can't make three notrump, and four hearts or five of a minor is unlikely."

"So it feels to me that bidding three spades is just handing them 300 or 500. I hate to go against the 'Law,' but here I'm afraid I'd do so. I can justify it by using one of my 'negative adjustment factors' which is 'Beware of 4-3-3 shape.'"

Dieble summed up: "There were 10 votes for three spades, 4 votes for three spades at matchpoints only, and 8 votes for pass, including my partner. I am not a results merchant, but I must admit that some of the arguments of the passers were persuasive enough for me to feel that they had the right answer to this one. I believe the three-club call was the worst bid made at the table, but the opponents were not on trial here. The soft nature of my hand, coupled with the lack of distributional features makes pass a more logical alternative."

"Although I am comforted that so many fine players jumped off the same cliff that I did, I have to go back and apologize to my partner for this one. Next time, when I make the cowardly pass, RHO will have opened light, partner will hold T9xxxx, x, KJxx, xx and we will miss a cold four spades."

Matthew Granovetter can be reached by e-mail at matt@bridgeday.com.

Chess Brits go head to head

By MICHEL SHORT

Congratulations to Barbara Schol, the organizer of the very strong Fontys Tournament in Tilburg, Netherlands, for doing the unthinkable: inviting two Englishmen, Michael Adams and Matthew Sadler, to play.

Furthermore, it is quite possible, likely even, that I would have been invited as well had I not been too old, as all the participants, except "professor" Korchnoi, are under the age of 30. I imagine the fear has always been that the cowardly Brits would take a quick draw.

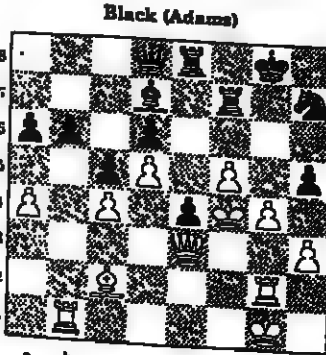
While this may once have been true, nowadays they are more likely to want to back each other to pieces, so intense is the rivalry, as Matthew and Michael demonstrated last week. Sadler, perhaps having more to prove, played aggressively, employing the Rubinstein variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence, a variation which was the height of fashion back in the 1950s.

There is much to be said for being so untrendy, especially when the line is as strategically rich and complicated as this. Even a player like Adams, whose intuitive grasp of piece and pawn placement is outstanding, failed to come up with a constructive plan.

White: Matthew Sadler
Black: Michael Adams
Fontys Tilburg NED, October 1998

1. d4 e6 2. c4 e5 3. d3 e4 4. e3 b6 5. d3. I do not intend to go into a thorough review of this opening here and so shall content myself with the comment that 5. Nge2 intending 6. a3 is perhaps the most challenging continuation. The text move staves up the important decisions for later. 5... e5. A hybrid system which I used against the Canadian Lesiege in Elista a few weeks ago. 9. a4 9. d2 d6 10. e4? cxd4 11. exd4 dxd4 12. c5 dxc5 13. d3 d6 14. e1 was the murky continuation of that game. 9... d6 10. d3? This looks like the move of a complete pater as it is obvious that the bishop is not going to find any joy on this diagonal. However, the idea behind it is profound: White intends to force through the e4 advance without letting Black obtain any immediate counterplay such as opening up the centre with d5. Once the centre is blocked the Black bishop on b7 will also be misplaced and so it is not clear that white will lose any time; in fact he might even gain it. 18... d4 10... d6 11. e4 e5 12. d5 e7 13. d4! leads to White's advantage. Also the ostensibly

flexible move; 10... e5d7 is insufficient. 11. d2d1 leaves him short of ideas. 11. e1! e5 11... e5? looks like a good attempt to throw a spanner in the works but maybe it is countered by the paradoxical 12. e1! 12. d3 e6 12... e5? 13. e2 traps the knight. 13. e2 e6 14. e4 fxe4 Mickey tends to like clean positions but I suspect on this occasion it is an error. Instead 14... f4! (denying the knight the e3 square and "threatening" e5) 15. e5 dxe5 16. dxe5 e7 is very unclear. 15. fxe4 e5 16. e5 e7 17. e2 e3 18. e1 returning home having accomplished the mission. 18... e2? 19. e2? Natural but, in view of what happens next, a clear loss of two tempi. 20. e2 directly is correct. 19... e7 20. e2 e7 21. e1 e2 22. e2 e2 22... e6! leaves White nothing to bite on. The king will come to g7 and a knight to g8, if need be. 23. e2! Obtaining a potential pawn roller. 23... e2 24. exf5 e6 25. e2 e4. Black is struggling to obtain counterplay but this fails to have the desired effect and merely ends up weakening the dark squares. It is difficult, however, to suggest a decent alternative. 26. e2 e2 27. g4 h5 28. h3 e8 29. e1 e8 30. e1. Hitting the e-pawn. 30... e6 31. e5 e6 32. e3. Black is blocking and controlling the dark squares. 32... e6 33. e4 e7 34. e2 e2 34... e6 35. g5 e6 36. f6! is the tactical point of White's move 31. 35. e2 e6 36. e1 e6.



White (Sadler) to play

Adams has defended against all punches but now he's stretched too far. 37. e1! A delightful shunting action. The g2 rook is protected and the way is cleared for the g2 rook to swing over decisively. 37... e6 37... e6 38. e2 e7 39. e1 e8. e2 e2 39. e2 e2. Crashing through. The queen-side's disintegrating so Black makes a last lunge. 39... e2 40. e2 e2 41. e2 e2. Black resigns. 41... e2 42. e2 e2. The queen and after 41... e2 the bishop is captured. A difficult game.

© Telegraph group

Flair Haute off the press

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Ever since ready-to-wear clothes became big business, mass producers have rushed to copy the creations of top-notch designers, sometimes exhibiting their look-alike collections within as little as 24 hours of the originals' runway debut.

But copycats are nothing more than just that. It's the real thing that counts.

Sure, it's fine to be trendy and to congratulate oneself on having spent so little in contriving the latest look. But let's not kid ourselves. Quality fabrics are quality fabrics, and the best simulated velvets and satins just don't measure up to the genuine article. And then there are details like cut and line.

It takes a lot of effort to come even close to the masters. If you want proof, especially in the realm of formal wear, take a look at these Yves Saint Laurent gowns and compare them to the much less expensive gowns that you see in local stores, excluding of course the upmarket offerings in Tel Aviv's Kikar Hamedina.

Just notice the drape and the accentuation of the waistlines.

Even the seductive femme-fatale offerings in the YSL collection have an elegance about them, and the see-through laces, though provocative, cannot in any way be



Yves Saint Laurent spells class, while less expensive copycats may convey a garish opulence



considered cheap.

And of course there's that quiet luxury that spells class, rather than that garish opulence which usually spells nouveau riche.

Now is a good time to buy haute if you can afford it, because at sale

time, even haute prices may actually be affordable to those of us who generally can't do more than just look and dream.

Kikar Hamedina is undoubtedly the best outlet for high-class fashion — not just suits and dresses, but

also shoes and even underwear. If you want to do a total Cinderella-type makeover, that's the place.

By the way, just off Kikar Hamedina, there's a store going out of business that's selling Christian Dior bags and those of almost

equally famous names in the world of fashion. It's certainly worth a trip to check out the huge discounts.

In the process, you might come across some other luxury items, which at this time of year will not drain your bank account. Enjoy!

150 من الاجل

Thursday,
December 24, 1998

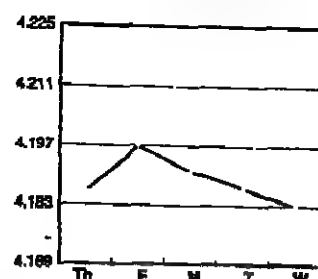
BUSINESS & FINANCE

The Jerusalem Post

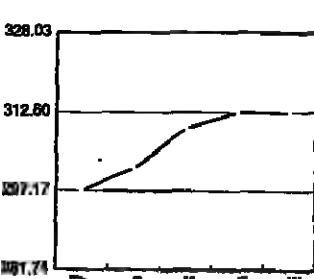
MARKETS

in brief

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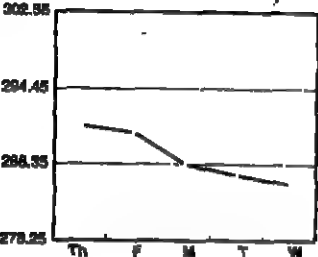


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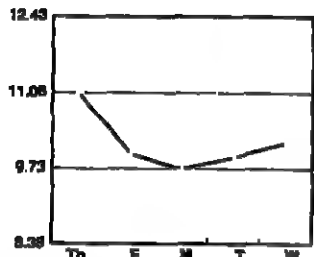
GOLD

\$ per ounce



OIL

\$ per barrel of Brent crude



Gas station tenders up for grabs

Tenders for 10 new gas station sites throughout the country will soon be opened to the public, an Infrastructure Ministry spokesperson said yesterday. Eight sites are being offered in the South, two in the North, and additional sites will be made available in 1999. The Gas Market Law, passed in the Knesset last July, calls for the Israel Lands Administration to make at least 150 sites available, providing gas stations along the new highways crisscrossing the country.

Jessica Steinberg

Ad hoc Israel-PA economic committee meets

Finance Ministry director-general Ben-Zion Zilberfarb and Palestinian Authority economic adviser Mahmoud Rashid recently met at the ad hoc Israel-Palestinian Economic Committee, created by the Wye Agreement. The two discussed various financial matters, including the PA's financial debts to Israel, A1 visa issues, and purchase taxes. "The real test of the committee's agreements will be in the actual execution," said Zilberfarb in a press release.

Jessica Steinberg

15% growth in 1998 agricultural investment

Agricultural investments grew 15% to NIS 400 million in 1998, compared with NIS 345m. in 1997, according to the Agricultural Center. The ministry supplied NIS 132m. of the year's total, compared with NIS 115m. government funding in 1997. Citrus orchards in the center of the country decreased to 5,900 dunams (1,475 acres) in 1998 from 8,600 dunams in 1997, a result of a decision by the citrus companies, Mehadrin and Tnuva, to develop orchards in the northern Negev.

Jessica Steinberg

Israeli, European officials warn if redeployment not implemented:

Israel to lose millions in EU funds

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

Israel's failure thus far to implement the Wye Memorandum is likely to cost the country millions of dollars of European Union research and development money, senior Israeli and European officials told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

On Tuesday, a European Council of Ministers working group decided not to include Israel in the EU's 5th Framework Program - which offers R&D funding to the tune of ECU 14.96 billion (\$12.79b.) for the next four years.

"It wasn't so much that they actively decided not to include Israel as they did so passively," said a European Commission official.

Commission policy is to encourage Israel to join the 5th Framework Program but its officials yesterday expressed their concern that the Council of Ministers, which is the lead organization for this issue, is linking it

to the Wye accord.

"It's bad, bad news, almost a war," one commission official said yesterday, of the row. "It will be a [diplomatic] disaster."

No one was prepared to say how much this will cost Israel. The program is funded by the participating states, with the pie being divided according to the appropriateness of R&D projects, rather than equally between nations. Israel was to have contributed \$40 million to the fund's coffers.

Israel is the only non-EU nation slated to join the program, having entered the 4th Framework in 1996.

The final decision on Israel's participation will be taken in the second week of January, by which time both Israel and the EU say a second redeployment is highly unlikely and therefore Israel will miss out.

Some in Israel argued that the country should not have participated in the 4th Framework, as the EU only wanted Israel to participate so European scientists could

benefit from Israeli knowhow.

"We think they'll lose out on what should be a joint venture," one Jerusalem official said last night. "They're letting political factors get in the way of scientific research."

Another Jerusalem source said the EU's attitude is "disgusting" at such a delicate time.

Officials in both Brussels and Jerusalem said this latest crisis in economic relations is likely to be far more serious than the ongoing trade dispute between the two sides. Both Israeli and commission sources said that the move to exclude Israel was led by France.

This was strongly denied by Pierre Lebovics, the political consul at the French Embassy in Tel Aviv.

"There maybe some confusion with some of the views of members of the French National Assembly concerning Israel's Association Treaty with the EU," he said. "I know France is open to [Israel's] signature

of the 5th Framework Program but such a process should be undertaken gradually."

To resolve the crisis, the commission believes Israel must begin a widespread public relations campaign among European politicians and diplomats.

"Israel mustn't come to us with complaints," said the commission official. "Rather, it should approach member states, leaning especially on Germany, which [is about to] hold the presidency."

Of the monies in the R&D pot, ECU 3.6b. will be spent on information technology; ECU 2.71b. on innovations; ECU 2.41b. on biological projects; ECU 1.26b. on nuclear research (from which Israel will be excluded, even if it is eventually allowed to join the overall program), and the remainder split between environmental and energy schemes. The EU insists none of the money be used for cloning research.

Distributions will initially be to small- and medium-sized enterprises.



Taking on the German banks

US attorney Ed Fagan (right) and his German colleague Michael Witt address reporters in front of Germany's gold and silver institution Degussa AG's headquarters in Frankfurt yesterday. Fagan and Witt are the lawyers for plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed against several German banks and Degussa AG for their role in dealing with gold stolen from Holocaust survivors.

(Reuters)

3rd quarter investment down 73%

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Overall investment in the economy shrank by 73.2 percent, to \$341 million, during the third quarter, compared to the same period in 1997, according to data published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

During the first nine months, investments fell 42.5% from the \$2.777b. registered last year. The current-account deficit shrank 30.5%, to \$2.314b. billion, during the first three quarters.

This strong improvement reflects the continued economic slowdown, as exports rise while imports decrease.

The current-account deficit shows the gap between income from export of goods and services, together with many types of transfers, and imports of goods and services.

The country's foreign debt increase by some \$2.8b. between January and September, against \$4.5b. in the same period in 1997. Foreign debt totaled \$54.3b. at the end of September, while assets amounted to \$37.1b.

Industrial production (excluding diamonds) grew at an annualized 3% between August and October, the bureau reported.

The number of hours worked during this period showed a yearly 3% decline. These figures are the latest in a series which show productivity to be on a downward course.

The Manufacturers Association also presented gloomy economic data in a report reviewing 1998 and looking at the year ahead.

The report describes 1998 as "the worst year by far during the last decade in terms of the economy." Growth only reached 1.4%, while per capita growth shrank 1%, far worse than the original forecasts.

It estimates 1999 will be even worse, with the economy growing by just 0.8%.

Local start-up wins \$200m. US Army contract

Start-up MadahCom of Or Yehuda has signed a \$200 million contract for the supply of early warning and alarm systems to the US Army. MadahCom's Waves system was chosen out of 30 competitors in the tender.

The system will be installed in 599 bases worldwide, over a period of five years. The first installations are expected in the first quarter of 1999.

The tender was issued following the bombing of a US base in Saudi Arabia in which 19 marines were killed three years ago. An investigation revealed that the base guards were suspicious of a truck that halted at the entrance to the base, and rushed to warn marines in nearby buildings. Because there was no early-warning system, they did not manage to relay the warning before the vehicle exploded.

Following the incident, a body was set up to advise and instruct the armed forces on combating terror. This body determined that an early warning system should be installed in every US armed forces base.

The winning system is a wireless communications system that supplies intercom services and protec-

tive measures, such as alarms and distress buttons; any other device that produces an electric signal can be added to it. The system is fire- and sabotage-proof.

MadahCom develops and manufactures various types of digital wireless systems for location management, emergency handling, loudspeakers, and background music which are used in several applications - early warning, alerting soldiers for evacuation, and transmitting written messages on an electronic board that advises passengers of arrival and departure times. The company employs 50 and has a fully owned subsidiary in New York.

The company was established in 1994 by three engineers: Dr. David Manela, Daniel Haimov, and Dr. Alan Avidan, who, together with employees and private investors, hold 50 percent of its shares. The remaining stake is held by venture capital funds Edgar, Mofet, Star, and the Evergreen group. To date, the company has raised \$7.4 million in two offerings, and is now on the verge of another to enable it to meet the terms of the contract.

(Globes News Service)

Netanyahu overturns Neeman decision

Treasury to extend rental tax exemption 1 year

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, in his capacity as acting finance minister, yesterday extended by a year the exemption of rental income from income tax, the Treasury said.

Former finance minister Yaakov Neeman wanted the exemption to be abolished at the end of the year, but Netanyahu yesterday approved its extension until December 1999.

Neeman believed the exemption, which had been introduced in 1990 to encourage property owners to rent to the large numbers of immigrants, was benefiting property owners rather than the immigrants.

But the Absorption and Housing ministries

objected to Neeman's plan, saying any lifting of the exemption would lead to renters being charged higher rents.

Earlier this week, deputy income tax commissioner Ehud Barzily told the Knesset Tax Subcommittee he favors abolishing the exemption and replacing it with a benefit that will directly help tenants, rather than landlords.

One example would be to increase government mortgages, which would encourage tenants to purchase properties, rather than "wasting" money on rent, according to Barzily and Knesset Finance Committee economist Smadar Elhanani.

Netanyahu's decision is dependent on the approval of the ministerial committee for leg-

islation, but given that the finance minister is now also the prime minister, the Treasury believes it is inevitable the extension will be confirmed.

The Treasury said the hope is that property owners will be encouraged to rent apartments, increasing supply, to ease the present shortfall.

Labor's chief economics spokesman, Avraham Shohat, said he does not understand how Netanyahu can "decide" when the move must be approved by the Knesset no later than December 31.

The exemption currently applies to a limit of NIS 6,800 monthly - a figure which is index-linked and updated every quarter.

Soda company pushes bottle bill

By JESSICA STEINBERG

Is bottle recycling in our future? It is if Soda-Club Ltd. has anything to say about it. The Jerusalem beverage product maker has asked Tel Aviv District Court to stop the Manufacturers Association from lobbying against the proposed beverage-container recycling bill, due for first reading in the Knesset on Monday.

Soda-Club's main beef with the association, of which it is a member, is the organization's decision to lobby against the bill without full agreement from all its members.

"There's a legal question mark whether it can represent an opinion that isn't shared by everybody," said Soda-Club managing director Dan Siner. The association is also acting as a monopoly, he said, requiring all local manufacturers to become members without fully representing everyone's interests. The association believes the bill would create higher prices and lower profits for beverage manu-

facturers.

"We're representing the interests of the majority of the industrialists in the country," said the association's spokesman. "If a certain manufacturer has specific interests, he can introduce it in any format."

The bill, introduced by Dedi Zucker (Meretz) and Avraham Poraz (Shinui), proposes adding a deposit on all beverage containers - glass, plastic, and aluminum - which consumers will get back when they return containers to recycling centers.

"It works for the manufacturer and the consumer," says Ruth Zamir, an economist at environmental organization Adam Teva V'din, one of the bill's supporters. "Compare the price of a half-liter bottle of beer and a 350-milliliter bottle. The half-liter is cheaper because you get the deposit back when you return the bottle."

Soda-Club, a privately held company, exports over \$80 million annually and has a long history in supporting "green" efforts, according to a company spokesman.

Elections bring hope to TASE

By DAN GERSTENFELD

While the period before elections is usually associated with rising uncertainty, a report published yesterday suggests that the coming weeks may offer a great opportunity for investors looking for the right time to enter the stock market.

The survey, conducted by Edna Brenner, an analyst at Ilanot Benucha, shows that after each of the last five election campaigns the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange went up by an annual average of 32 percent in real terms, compared with an average increase of only 7.6% since 1980. At the same time, the first quarter after the elections was characterized by higher yields when compared to the average quarterly return, while the quarter before the elections was lower than average. It is interesting to note that the stock market rose no matter which party won.

The findings of the survey are not scientific and five elections are not seen as a solid enough sample to

draw conclusions.

Brenner said that while the period before an election is characterized by higher uncertainty which has a negative impact on stock prices, the period after the vote is identified with higher stability, which is reflected in higher returns for investors.

According to the findings, the best period was 1992, after Yitzhak Rabin won the election, with the stock market posting real returns of 38.6%, slightly higher than the 36.2% rise recorded after the Likud won the election in 1988.

The worst post-election period was 1996, after Binyamin Netanyahu was elected. In the year after the election, stock prices rose by only 21.8%. After the Likud won in 1981, there was a 32.8% increase, and after the forming of the unity government in 1984, a 34.1% rise.

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Lehman: Cautious outlook for TASE

By DAN GERSTENFELD

The outlook for the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange remains cautious in the near term according to a report prepared recently by US investment house Lehman Brothers.

Lehman's economists, who wrote the report before the announcement on the early elections, said that risks include continued political uncertainties, further problems with the implementation of the peace process, difficulties passing the budget, potential for a raise in interest rates and a delay in the resumption of declining interest rates.

The paper said, however, that Lehman remains confident in the mid to long-term prospects as it believes that the economic slow-

down will bottom out in 1999 into growth of 3.6 percent in the year 2000. In addition, interest rates are expected to return to a downward path as soon as the first quarter of 1999.

The investment house notes that despite the fact that the Maof index has gained 1.5% and the TA-100 rose 2.7% until the beginning of December foreigners investing here have lost money as the depreciation of the shekel affected returns in dollar terms with indices dropping 13%-14% since the beginning of the year. On this basis Bezeq Israel Telecom was the only share to achieve positive returns for overseas investors.

Lehman's analysts added that they believe that the shekel will close the year at around NIS 4.15

per dollar and will depreciate another 5% against the US currency next year. Inflation for 1998 is expected to reach around 8.5-9% and 4-4.5% next year.

PRIME
Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents

Date: 22.12.98
Purchase Price: 123.99
Redemption Price: 123.31

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Date: 22.12.98
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TASE mixed as Teva falls

Local stocks were mixed yesterday. Teva Pharmaceutical Industries fell after its US shares dropped Tuesday, while Dead Sea Works rose after it said it would sign an agreement with the Spanish government to buy a majority stake in Grupo Potasas for \$113 million.

LAST	CHANGE
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Tel Aviv 200	+0.1875
Tel Aviv 300	+0.1875
Tel Aviv 400	+0.1875
Tel Aviv 500	+0.1875
Tel Aviv 600	+0.1875
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Tel Aviv

Local stocks were mixed yesterday. Teva Pharmaceutical Industries fell after its US shares dropped Tuesday, while Dead Sea Works rose after it said it would sign an agreement with the Spanish government to buy a majority stake in Grupo Potasas for \$113 million.

The Maof Index of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange's 25 largest companies fell 0.03 percent to 312.50 after gaining 2.61 percent on Monday.

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries fell 1.76 percent to 172.70 after its American depositary receipts, which trade on the US Nasdaq Composite Index, fell 1.2 percent.

Dead Sea Bromine dropped 3.36 percent to 25.9. The pesticide maker was maintained as a "hold" by Gmull Sahar Securities.

First International Mortgage Bank rose 28.21 percent. The provider of real estate mortgages announced it would distribute a dividend of NIS 265 payable Jan. 18.

Dead Sea Works rose 3.51 percent to 9.73. The Spanish government approved Dead Sea Works' \$113 million offer to buy a 60 percent stake in Grupo Potasas, a competitor that manufactured 1 million tons of potash a year for use in chemical fertilizers.

Israel Chemicals, parent company of Dead Sea Works, rose 2.22 percent to 4.14.

Koor Industries rose 1.98 percent to 3.61. Lehman Brothers gave Koor, Israel's largest industrial concern, an "outperform" rating, contesting a Nelson consensus of analysts that rated Koor a "weak buy."

Super-Sol rose 0.60 percent to 10.21. Israel's largest supermarket chain was maintained "outperform" by Lehman Brothers, which set a 12-month target price range of NIS 11 to NIS 12 a share.

European stocks rose, led by car-makers, as a report that Volvo AB has held talks with Ford Motor Co. prompted speculation of more mergers in the auto industry.

German carmaker Bayerische Motoren Werke AG also reported a jump in November sales.

"We're going to see a whole series of mergers as carmakers realize that they have to be global," said Thierry Girardet, a fund manager at Fival SA, who declined to state the size of his funds under management.

He's bought PSA Peugeot Citroen in anticipation it will either buy or be bought by a rival. Peugeot rose 40 French francs to 863.

The Bloomberg Europe 500 index rose 1.89 points, or 1 percent, to 197.80 a three-week high and its second rise in four days.

South Korean stocks rose on hopes debt-laden companies interest costs may fall after Fitch IBCA became the second credit ratings company this week to say it may upgrade Korea's sovereign rating.

The benchmark Kospi index rose 5.78, or 1.1 percent, to 553.53. Korea Electric Power Corp., Samsung Electronics Co. and Pohang Iron & Steel Co., which have a combined long-term overseas debt of \$21.7 billion, accounted for two thirds of the index's gains.

Korea's debt is now rated below investment grade, the minimum required by many pension funds for purchases.

"I'm convinced the three ratings agencies will upgrade early next year if there's one tangible example of restructuring," said Park Kyung Min, chief investment officer of Asset Korea Ltd., who manages about 100 billion won (\$83 million) in equities. "I'll be accumulating shares of the big companies from now on."

NYSE volume totaled 689.98 million shares, up slightly from 678.55 at the same time on Tuesday.

The NYSE composite index rose 10.20 to 588.95, and the American Stock Exchange composite index rose 9.43 to 664.78.

Wall Street

NEW YORK - As the Dow industrials moved closer to a record, a run-up in technology stocks drove other key indicators to all-time highs yesterday.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 157.57, or 1.7 percent, to close at 9,202.03, extending its gains to 411 points over the past five sessions and nearing the November 23 record of 9,374.27.

The Dow, which dropped below 7,500 as recently as October 8, now is up 16.4 percent this year.

The Standard and Poor's 500 index reached its third straight record close and the technology-rich Nasdaq composite easily erased a Tuesday drop to hop past Monday's record.

Smaller companies continued to get the snub in this year-end rally, however, with most investors inviting only the biggest and best-known names to the party.

The Standard and Poor's 500 rose 24.97 to 1,228.54, and the Nasdaq composite rose 51.56 to 2,172.54.

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(AP)

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100 DAYS

ABL calls it quits

The American Basketball League, hemorrhaging money with its \$900,000-a-year payrolls for each of its nine teams, announced Tuesday it was closing down.

The league's board decided late Monday to suspend operations and file a voluntary Chapter 11 bankruptcy petition "to ensure an orderly liquidation of the league."

The ABL died after 2 seasons of top-flight women's pro basketball, most observers rating the league superior in talent to the rival, richer WNBA. But those observers also wondered how long it could last.

With the exception of the strong-drawing New England Blizzard, attendance was a problem league-wide. But an even greater hurdle was the lack of significant TV exposure.

"This year we offered millions of dollars to the TV networks for air time, but couldn't obtain adequate coverage. We had no choice but to shut down," CEO Gary Cavalli said. We exhausted every option." (Los Angeles Times)

Real drama took place outside the ring

Tyson's license, retirements of Julio Chavez and Roberto Duran and death of Archie Moore highlighted the 1998 boxing scene

NEW YORK (AP) - Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis, the premier practicing heavyweights, both won in 1998, but the biggest boxing drama played out in a Las Vegas hearing room when Mike Tyson got his license back.

Tyson's ban from boxing, a result of his biting Evander Holyfield's ears June 28, 1997, ended when the Nevada State Athletic Commission voted 4-1 October 19 to restore his license. He is scheduled to fight Francois Botha next month in the MGM Grand at Las Vegas.

Out-of-ring problems, however, did not end for the 32-year-old former undisputed heavyweight champion.

On December 1, he pleaded no contest to two misdemeanor assault charges for kicking and punching two motorists with whom he was involved in an auto accident August 31 at Gaithersburg, Maryland. He is scheduled to be sentenced in February. An Indiana judge then will decide how it will affect Tyson's probation, stemming from his

conviction for rape. Tyson's probation is scheduled to end in March.

Holyfield and Lewis both defended titles in 1998 and were set for a championship unification fight March 13 in Madison Square Garden at New York.

Holyfield, the 36-year-old IBF-WBA champion, outpointed Vaughn Bean in less-than-exciting fashion in an IBF mandatory title defense before 41,357 fans in the champion's hometown of Atlanta. He was supposed to make a WBA mandatory defense against Henry Akinwande of Great Britain June 6 at New York, but the fight was called off when Akinwande tested positive for hepatitis-B.

Lewis, the 33-year WBC heavyweight champion from Britain, escaped serious trouble in the first two rounds and stopped Shannon Briggs in the fifth round March 25 at Atlantic City. He also made a mandatory defense in which he was unimpressive in outpointing Zeljko Mavrovic of Croatia September 26 at the

Mohegan Sun Casino at Uncasville, Connecticut.

Boxing's biggest non-heavyweight attraction, Oscar De La Hoya, defended the WBC welterweight title twice. In the second defense, he stopped Julio Cesar Chavez of Mexico in the eighth round of their rematch. He was supposed to defend against unbeaten Ike Quartey of Ghana, a former WBA welterweight champion, but that November 21 bout was rescheduled for February at Las Vegas after De La Hoya got cut while sparring.

In November, a lawsuit was filed in San Bernardino County (California) Superior Court in behalf of an unidentified woman accusing De La Hoya of raping her in a hotel room at Cabo San Lucas Mexico in June 1996. The 24-year-old boxer attorney said he thinks the action was financially motivated.

Roy Jones Jr., considered by many boxing people to be the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world, fought three times - winning two championships

and one non-title match. In the non-title bout, he stopped Virgil Hill, a former light heavyweight champion, in the fourth round. Jones, who will be 30 January 16, added the WBA light-heavyweight title to the WBC championship he already held by outpointing Lou Del Valle July 18.

A potentially big star emerged when only five days after his 21st birthday, Fernando Vargas, in 15th pro fight, stopped Yory Boy Campas of Mexico, in his 75th fight, in the eighth round on December 12 and won the IBF junior middleweight championship.

De La Hoya's intense battering of Chavez, a former junior lightweight, lightweight and junior welterweight champion, probably ended the 36-year-old Mexican's career, at least as a major fighter.

The career of Roberto Duran also apparently came to an end when the 47-year-old Panamanian was stopped in the third round by William Joppy in a bid for

the WBA middleweight title. Duran posted a 102-14 record and won lightweight, welterweight, junior middleweight and middleweight titles in a career that began in 1967. During that time, the only years in which he didn't fight were 1985 and 1990.

Archie Moore, Harry Markson, Chris Dundee and Don Dunphy, who played longtime key roles in boxing, died during the year.

Moore, 84, scored 141 knockouts in an incredible 28-year career which ended at 49 and during which he was world light heavyweight champion for nine years.

Markson, 92, was involved in the promotion of more than 2,000 fights by the time he retired as president of Madison Square Garden Boxing in 1973.

Dundee, 91, was a longtime promoter and manager and brother of legendary trainer Angelo Dundee.

Dunphy, 90, was the Voice of Boxing, which broadcast more than 2,000 fights on radio and television.

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'Off the scrap heap'

Bill Parcells's recycled roster takes Jets to postseason

The consensus is clear from the New York Jets' locker room: Bill Parcells should be the undisputed NFL Coach of the Year.

"Give it to him, hands down," linebacker Mo Lewis said. "He took a team from the disarray of 1-15, to 9-7, to 11-4 and AFC East champs."

MY CALL

By BOB GLAUBER

Linebacker Chad Cascadden agreed. "Denny Green has done a great job in Minnesota. Dan Reeves has done a great job in Atlanta, and other guys around the league have done really well," he said. "But when a guy has been able to take a team from where it was to where it is now, my pick would be Bill."

Mine, too. But Parcells not only gets my Coach of the Year vote by a nose over Reeves, who worked so hard resurrecting the Falcons he wound up needing a quadruple bypass, Parcells gets Executive of the Year, as well.

For as terrific a job as Parcells has done as the sideline mastermind of the Jets' stunning ascent from the ashes of 1-15 in 1996, he has done an even better job in assembling the talent to give the franchise its first division title in 29 years.

Parcells has retooled the roster with breathtaking speed, keeping only a handful of key players such as Lewis, receivers Keyshawn Johnson and Wayne Chabert, and defensive backs Aaron Glenn and Victor Green. As for most of the rest, Parcells brought them in himself, and in the process has completely refuted the notion that his personnel acumen was not on the same level with his in-your-face brand of coaching.

Of the Jets' 22 starters, 14 were brought in by Parcells. Throw in the kicker and punter, and it's 16 of 24.

That's a division title after a 67-percent turnover rate in two seasons.

His controversial deal to sign restricted free-agent running back Curtis Martin to a six-year, \$36-million contract was a bold move, criticized by many in the league because Parcells had to send first- and third-round picks to division rival New England, then dole out a contract that was slightly above market value.

But time has demonstrated that the decision was correct, because Martin, despite occasional slumps that all the great runners endure, has been a critical part of the Jets' success.

P.S.: The Patriots — or what's left of this injury-ravaged team, anyway — are 1-2 against the Jets with Parcells, 0-1 against the Jets without Martin.

Over the objections of some in the organization, who said Baltimore Ravens quarterback Vinny Testaverde was more game than godsend, Parcells signed him, anyway, stunning some of his front-office executives, most of whom were on vacation at the time Parcells decided to make the move.

Testaverde has responded with the best year of his career, and will be worthy of Most Valuable Player consideration behind Denver Broncos running back Terrell Davis, Vikings quarterback Randall Cunningham and Vikings receiver Randy Moss.

The feeling here before the season was that Parcells should have kept the experienced Neil O'Donnell around in case Glenn Foley faltered; that feeling no longer exists, thanks to Testaverde's Pro Bowl season.

Parcells' signing of Bryan Cox after the injury to linebacker Marvin Jones proved equally important to Testaverde's arrival. No one wanted Cox after the Chicago Bears let him go in the

offseason, but he has become the team's most important defensive player.

"Parcells likes to pull guys off the scrap heap, and I'm one of them," Cox said. "He's an amazing judge of talent. He sees things in people others don't."

Oakland Raiders Owner Al Davis used to be the master at collecting other teams' castoffs and turning them into champions. Substitute Testaverde for Jim Plunkett and Cox for Ted Hendricks, and Parcells has done a wonderful imitation of his friend and mentor Davis, who was the personnel genius of his day before losing his touch in the mid-1980s.

The signing of free-agent center Kevin Mawae, derided by some personnel people who believed Parcells overpaid for the Seattle Seahawks lineman (\$16.8m over five years), is now being commended by many of those same critics. Were it not for the virtually automatic inclusion of Pittsburgh Steelers center Dermont Dawson to the Pro Bowl, Mawae would be playing in Hawaii instead.

Many of Parcells' more modest free-agent deals have borne fruit. No one thought defensive end Anthony Pleasant could play anymore, but he has been the best of a no-name defensive line. Pleasant was considered a weak alternative to Hugh Douglas, who was traded to Philadelphia, but Douglas' pass-rushing skills haven't been missed.

Pleasant is only one of a handful of Parcells' defensive-line imports, such as former seventh-round defensive tackle Jason Ferguson, defensive end Rick Lyle and defensive tackle Ernie Logan.

Cornerback Otis Smith, who joined Parcells last season, used to be considered the weak link of the Jets' secondary. But so far this year, Smith has given up just one touchdown pass. That's an almost unheard-of statistic for any cornerback whose name is not Deion Sanders.

If you want to nitpick Parcells' stewardship as the Jets' personnel czar, then point to his ill-fated drafting last year of second-round pick Rick Terry, who was released this season. Or look to 1997 first-round linebacker James Farrior, who is a functional player but has yet to live up to his billing as a top-10 prospect.

Yet when you consider the draft-choice constraints that Parcells has been under since his arrival in February, 1997, it is a wonder that the Jets have come this far. After all, in many respects, Parcells inherited a team that was more difficult to construct than an expansion club.

Think about it. Not only was he dealing with a roster bereft of sufficient talent, but he started off without four high draft picks as a result of NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue's decision to strip the Jets of one first-round pick (in 1999), a second rounder (in '98) and third- and fourth-round picks (in '97) in exchange for Parcells signing on in New York a year before his Patriots contract expired.

Expansion franchises Carolina and Jacksonville each received an extra pick in every round of the '95 draft, and received additional freebies in '96. The same will hold true for the Cleveland Browns for the next two seasons.

But Parcells has made the most of the dearth of draft picks by shrewdly following his gut instincts to assemble a squad worthy of Super Bowl consideration.

All this, less than 24 months after the Jets put the finishing touches on one of the worst seasons in NFL history. (Newsday)

Coyotes howl at slumping Red Wings



DETROIT (AP) — Dallas Drake, Keith Tkachuk and Jeremy Roenick each had a goal and an assist as the Phoenix Coyotes beat the struggling Detroit Red Wings.

Juha Ylonen, Teppo Numminen and Bob Corkum also scored for the Coyotes, who have won both their meetings with Detroit.

The Coyotes have won two straight following their first two-game losing streak of the season and have 42 points, just two behind first-place Dallas in the Pacific Division.

The two-time defending Stanley Cup champions have lost three straight, four out of five and are 4-10 against teams with .500 or better records.

Kings 3, Penguins 0

Jamie Storr stopped 25 shots and Glen Murray scored one goal and set up another in 27 seconds as Los Angeles won on the road.

The win was Larry Robinson's 100th in four seasons as the Kings' coach. He has a 100-136-43 record in that time.

Islanders 3, Blues 3

Todd Gill spoiled Zigmund Palffy's return to the Islanders with his first goal of the season in the final six minutes, giving visiting St. Louis Blues a tie.

Palffy, playing his first game since ending a long holdout last week, assisted on two goals. Palffy, the Islanders' top goal scorer the last three seasons, signed a five-year deal for about \$25 million to end a long and sometimes acrimonious contract battle with the team.

Mighty Ducks 1, Avalanche 0

Dominic Roussel stopped 45 shots for his first victory in more than two years and Jeff Nielsen scored his first goal of the season as Anaheim notched a road win.

Roussel, who last won on March 22, 1996 in a 4-1 victory over Winnipeg, outduelled Colorado goalie Patrick Roy, who made 20 saves.

Canucks 5, Flames 3

Harry York's goal and two assists led Vancouver to a road win in a game marred by a head injury to Canucks captain Mark Messier. Messier was injured when he crashed into the Flames' net after shooting a goal in the first.



DEBUT — Islanders right winger Zigmund Palffy (r) skates against Blues defenseman Marc Bergevin in first-period action. Palffy played his first game of the season following a lengthy contract holdout.

St. Louis 1980-81 2011-12	2016-17 2017-18	2018-19 2019-20	2020-21 2021-22	2022-23 2023-24	2024-25 2025-26	2026-27 2027-28	2028-29 2029-30	2030-31 2031-32	2032-33 2033-34	2034-35 2035-36	2036-37 2037-38	2038-39 2039-40	2040-41 2041-42	2042-43 2043-44	2044-45 2045-46	2046-47 2047-48	2048-49 2049-50	2050-51 2051-52	2052-53 2053-54	2054-55 2055-56	2056-57 2057-58	2058-59 2059-60	2060-61 2061-62	2062-63 2063-64	2064-65 2065-66	2066-67 2067-68	2068-69 2069-70	2070-71 2071-72	2072-73 2073-74	2074-75 2075-76	2076-77 2077-78	2078-79 2079-80	2080-81 2081-82	2082-83 2083-84	2084-85 2085-86	2086-87 2087-88	2088-89 2089-90	2090-91 2091-92	2092-93 2093-94	2094-95 2095-96	2096-97 2097-98	2098-99 2099-00	2100-01 2101-02	2102-03 2103-04	2104-05 2105-06	2106-07 2107-08	2108-09 2109-10	2110-11 2111-12	2112-13 2113-14	2114-15 2115-16	2116-17 2117-18	2118-19 2119-20	2120-21 2121-22	2122-23 2123-24	2124-25 2125-26	2126-27 2127-28	2128-29 2129-30	2130-31 2131-32	2132-33 2133-34	2134-35 2135-36	2136-37 2137-38	2138-39 2139-40	2140-41 2141-42	2142-43 2143-44	2144-45 2145-46	2146-47 2147-48	2148-49 2149-50	2150-51 2151-52	2152-53 2153-54	2154-55 2155-56	2156-57 2157-58	2158-59 2159-60	2160-61 2161-62	2162-63 2163-64	2164-65 2165-66	2166-67 2167-68	2168-69 2169-70	2170-71 2171-72	2172-73 2173-74	2174-75 2175-76	2176-77 2177-78	2178-79 2179-80	2180-81 2181-82	2182-83 2183-84	2184-85 2185-86	2186-87 2187-88	2188-89 2189-90	2190-91 2191-92	2192-93 2193-94	2194-95 2195-96	2196-97 2197-98	2198-99 2199-00	2200-01 2201-02	2202-03 2203-04	2204-05 2205-06	2206-07 2207-08	2208-09 2209-10	2210-11 2211-12	2212-13 2213-14	2214-15 2215-16	2216-17 2217-18	2218-19 2219-20	2220-21 2221-22	2222-23 2223-24	2224-25 2225-26	2226-27 2227-28	2228-29 2229-30	2230-31 2231-32	2232-33 2233-34	2234-35 2235-36	2236-37 2237-38	2238-39 2239-40	2240-41 2241-42	2242-43 2243-44	2244-45 2245-46	2246-47 2247-48	2248-49 2249-50	2250-51 2251-52	2252-53 2253-54	2254-55 2255-56	2256-57 2257-58	2258-59 2259-60	2260-61 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Stewart lashes England teammates

MELBOURNE (Reuters) — England captain Alec Stewart has criticized his teammates after their humiliating nine-wicket defeat by an Australian XI on Tuesday but dismissed suggestions that the loss had affected morale ahead of Saturday's fourth Test.

Stewart, who missed the game against the Australian second team, said the English players had themselves to blame after allowing the home team to pile up 376 runs in 55.2 overs to win.

"What went on wasn't the right standard," Stewart said yesterday after the England team arrived in Melbourne to prepare for the Ashes Test. "It was totally unacceptable and a few people have to put their hand up and say why."

England manager Graham Gooch said the tourists would train on each of the next two days before naming their team on Christmas Day.

The first day of the annual Melbourne Boxing Day Test is traditionally the biggest day on the Australian cricket calendar and a crowd in excess of 80,000 is expected despite England's flagging fortunes.

But Stewart said England's players remained determined to win the remaining two Tests to square the series even though they cannot regain the Ashes after losing two and drawing one of the first three Tests.

"The riot act wasn't read but there were a few things pointed out at lunch and tea yesterday," Stewart said.

"There will be a very open and honest chat before we start practice tomorrow and you don't have to be too bright to work out what might be said. "We are looking to make it two-all and square the series."

While England's cricketers have gone from bad to worse, Australia have gone from strength to strength.

As England were battling against Australia's second-string team, most of Australia's frontline players took a break from Test duties to play in last week-end's Sheffield Shield. Three batsmen, Michael Slater, Mark Waugh and Steve Waugh, all completed centuries.

The Australians were forced to make a late change to their squad after paceman Jason Gillespie was ruled out of after failing a fitness Test. His absence is unlikely to prove a blessing for England.

Gillespie, who took five second innings wickets in Australia's second Test win over England in Perth last month, has a knee injury.

He was replaced in the 12-man squad by West Australian fast bowler Matthew Nicholson, who has played just seven first-class matches.

Nicholson's career was in jeopardy a year ago after he contracted Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, but he recovered to emerge as one of the best prospects in the country.

He has taken 17 wickets in four Sheffield Shield matches this season and claimed seven wickets in an innings in Western Australia's draw with England last month.

"I was just blown away when I was told," Nicholson said of his selection.

Nicholson believes he will never recover fully from CFS, but keeps it under control with a strict diet, which includes avoiding alcohol.



LONG ROAD BACK — England captain Michael Atherton grimaces as he contemplates the fourth Ashes Test against Australia starting Saturday.

Raptors' Willis wants secret ballot

Nike: No play, no pay, no way



TORONTO (AP) — Kevin Willis of the Toronto Raptors defied his union leadership Tuesday and called for NBA players to vote by secret ballot in hopes of ending the lockout.

"The majority would vote for the owners' latest proposal," Willis said, referring to the offer made last week by NBA commissioner David Stern.

The lockout began July 1 and the regular season, which was to have begun October 31, has been delayed until at least late January.

No new talks are scheduled, with Stern on vacation in Aspen, Colorado and union chief Billy Hunter in Oakland, California.

Tuesday marked the 10th day since the last round of bargaining, and players continue to lose \$50 million a week in salaries. If a deal isn't reached soon, the entire season will be scrapped. Stern has refused to say when it will be too late to save the season.

"I believe that a blind ballot would be acceptable," said Steve Woods, Willis' agent and a professor of sports business at South Carolina. "I think 80 percent would accept it (the proposal), based on the 15 players I talk to on a regular basis."

Union spokesman Dan Wasserman didn't agree. "We conducted conference calls over the last two weeks with more than 120 players on each call," he said. "At least a dozen players on each call specifically told us they will wait for the negotiating committee to recommend a deal that is worthy of putting to a vote. The vast majority of players support the authority of the negotiating com-

mittee to recommend a deal. A secret ballot is something the union is adamantly against," Wasserman said.

Meanwhile, Nike has a new message for its high-priced NBA pitchmen: No play, no pay.

Slumping sales have led the world's largest athletic shoe company to exercise its option to withhold quarterly endorsement payments to most of the 230 NBA players it has under contract.

"We are doing this because the lockout is hurting fans. It's hurting the sport, and it's hurting the value of our investments in the NBA," Vizzier Mooney, a Nike spokesman, said Tuesday.

The decision risked alienating some athletes, she admitted, but after three straight quarters of declining Nike profits, the company must reassess its investment.

"There is no way we'd threaten our relationship with the NBA or the many players we're partnered with," Mooney said. "But we have to be fiscally responsible."

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NFL Individual Leaders

AFC						NFC					
Quarterbacks	Att	Yds	TD	Int		Quarterbacks	Att	Yds	TD	Int	
Testaverde, NY-J	394	242	30	17	5	Cunningham, Min	390	236	34	9	
O'Donnell, Cin	343	212	22	15	4	S. Young, S.E.	485	300	38	12	
Bruneau, Jac	354	208	26	20	9	Chandler, Atl	324	187	30	23	
Elway, Den	370	184	24	18	10	Berrier, Car	322	204	24	16	
Flutie, Buf	354	202	27	20	11	Fane, C.B.	300	177	21	14	
Bledsoe, M.E.	481	263	36	20	14	Alkham, Dal	308	173	21	11	
Harding, Mia	501	289	37	22	13	Batch, Den	303	173	21	11	
McNair, Ten	459	273	29	15	10	Kramer, Chi	250	151	10	9	
Gannon, K.C.	354	206	23	15	8	T. Green, Was	474	257	32	10	
Hoon, Sea	258	145	16	11	8	Plummer, Ariz	506	304	34	17	
Rushers						Rushers					
Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD		Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Davis, Den	363	1830	5.0	70	21	J. Anderson, Atl	392	1743	4.4	48	13
Faulk, Ind	306	1247	4.1	68	6	Nears, S.E.	300	1549	5.2	96	7
E. George, Ten	334	1240	3.7	37	1	Sanders, Den	324	1450	4.5	73	4
Watters, Sea	309	1226	4.0	39	8	E. Smith, Dal	309	1265	4.1	32	11
Martin, NY-J	340	1185	3.5	60	8	R. Smith, Min	234	1114	4.8	74	6
E. Taylor, Jac	243	1152	4.7	77	13	Hurrell, Ariz	256	1017	4.0	32	7
Christie, NY-J	288	1082	3.8	30	7	Staley, Phil	242	968	4.0	46	4
Edwards, M.E.	279	1068	3.8	53	9	Brown, NY-G	222	951	4.3	45	5
Dillon, Cin	248	1060	4.3	66	4	Pruett, Ind	226	937	4.1	50	2
Beris, Pit	290	1046	3.6	42	3	Mosier, L.B.	195	777	4.0	37	5
Receivers						Receivers					
No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD		No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
McDuffie, Mia	85	968	11.4	61	6	Sanders, Ariz	81	1039	12.8	42	3
Faulk, Ind	82	878	10.7	78	4	Rice, S.E.	78	1188	14.2	75	8
Pickens, Cin	80	1006	12.6	67	5	Freeman, G.B.	77	1359	17.6	84	13
R. Smith, Den	77	1064	13.8	58	5	Irvins, Den	72	1007	14.0	43	1
J. Johnson, NY-J	77	1054	13.7	41	9	Carter, Mia	72	993	13.0	54	11
J. Smith, Jac	75	1029	14.9	72	8	Moore, Den	72	963	12.0	36	5
Christie, NY-J	71	1039	14.6	63	8	Mukamamwa, Car	68	941	13.8	72	6
T. Brown, Oak	71	972	12.3	49	8	Horton, Den	66	988	15.0	98	2
Wyche, Ten	67	734	11.0	38	2	R. Moss, Min	64	1281	20.0	61	16
Hood, Buf	67	726	11.7	84	8	Mattis, Atl	63	1126	17.9	70	11
Coates, M.E.	65	643	9.9	33	6	Martin, Atl	63	1076	17.1	62	5
						Rob Moore, Ariz	63	888	14.1	57	5

